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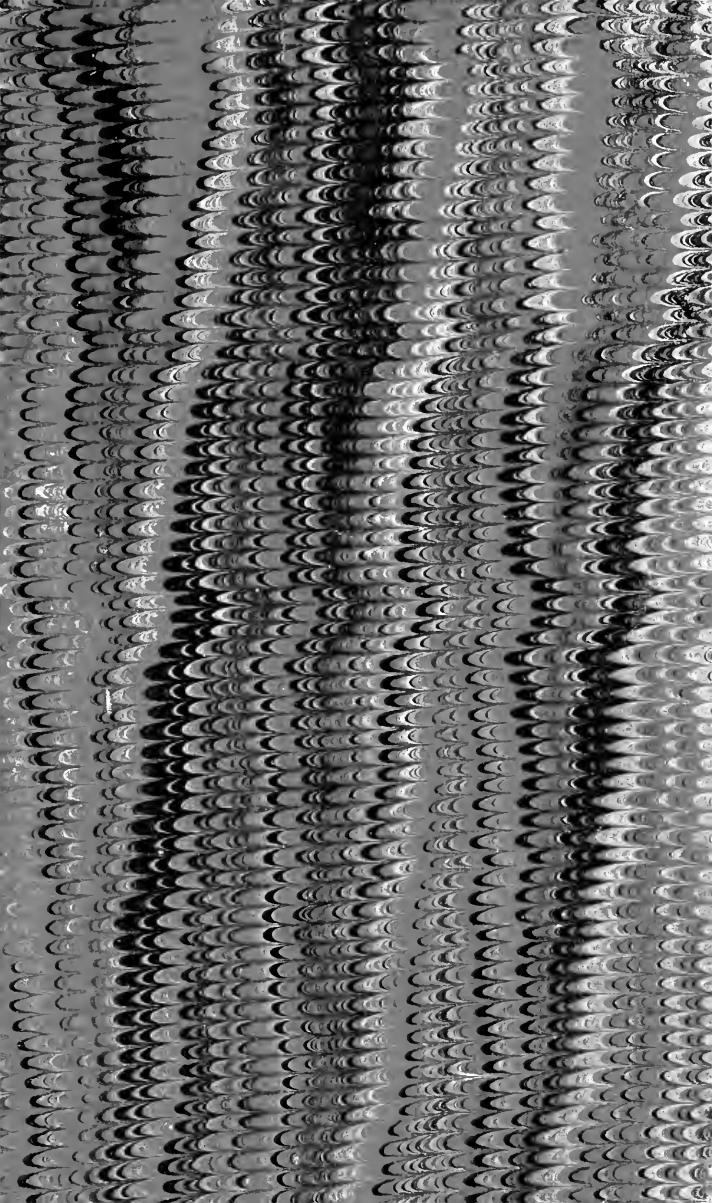
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# AMONG MY BOOKS.

By William B. Ewald

HE that loveth a book will never want a faithful friend, a wholesome counsellor, a cheerful companion, an effectual comforter. By study, by reading, by thinking, one may innocently divert and pleasantly entertain himself, as in all weathers, so in all fortunes.—BARROW.

WHEN this bundle of egotisms is bound up together, as they may be one day, if no accident prevents this tongue from wagging, or this ink from running, they will bore you, very likely; so it would to read through "Howell's Letters" from beginning to end, or to eat up the whole of a ham: but a slice on occasion may have a relish: a dip into the volume at random, and so on for a page or two: and now and then a smile; and presently a gape; and the book drops out of your hand; and so, *bon soir*, and pleasant dreams to you.—THACKERAY.

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TO

MY YOUNG DAUGHTER,

COMPANION OF THE LONELY HOURS WHEN

THESE ESSAYS WERE WRITTEN,

THIS VOLUME

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.





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## INTRODUCTION.

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THESE Essays were meant to be purely fugitive, and the idea of their being collected in a volume never entered the writer's mind till it was suggested and kindly urged by those near and at a distance to whom he was personally a stranger. In this form they need a word of preface. The student will find in them nothing new. All that they are designed to effect is to freshen the dim memories of familiar books, and whatever merit they have is their success in doing this—no more. It is a very slender bundle of literary egotisms. They have accidentally the same title as one of Mr. Lowell's productions; but while his volume relates only to three or four books or writers, these memories float round and grasp, in perhaps a feeble way, many more. Such as they are, they are submitted diffidently to the public judgment. The volume is too slight to bear the burden of notes and authorities, and they are as a general rule omitted. If errors are detected, it should be borne in mind that it is the memory rather than the contact with books these crit-

icisms are meant to represent. It would be great ingratitude were the expression of thanks to be omitted to the Editor of the *New York World*, through whose kindness these little essays found their way to the public, and their author was encouraged to continue them.

# AMONG MY BOOKS.

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WHEN Southey, at the end of life, fell into mental decay, he used to walk around his library, take book after book from the shelves, look at the binding and titles, and, without the ability to read, seem to commune with them as with old friends on the edge of separation. I am becoming an old man now, but I hope not childish, and, looking at my books, the accumulation of some forty years, the melancholy feeling comes over me that we, before long, shall have to part. Let me, then, with no parade of learning, jot down some thoughts on these familiar volumes, not grouped in regular or scientific order, and read with quite as little method. In other words, without preface or promise, my idea is to write my thoughts on books—an American student's rambling notes on the prose literature of his mother-tongue—and that student, not a technical scholar, but a professional man, who has always had to work hard for a living, and now, when life is nearly over, finds all that is left to him is the memory of books.

## SWIFT.

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WHAT is the strange fascination of this most repulsive being, and, in the common sense of the word, unattractive writer? Read his life, as told by himself and others, and you find nothing that can be called winning, and yet Bolingbroke, and Harley, and Pope, and Arbuthnot were fond of him, and Stella and Vanessa loved him dearly. From the time when, as a boy, I read Gulliver and believed it, till relatively late in life, Swift was one of my postponed studies; and yet so entangled did I at last become in the vague fascination to which I have alluded, that, on reaching Dublin, years ago, my first visit was to St. Patrick's Cathedral to look at the Dean's "fearful bust," and as fearful epitaph, the

*"Ubi sæva indignatio,  
Ulterius cor lacerare nequit,"*

and poor Stella's tombstone alongside; and, had I known it then, should have gone to see the plaster cast taken after death, which Sir Walter Scott describes as at Trinity College—"with the unequivocally maniacal expression of countenance, and the left side of the mouth horribly contorted downward, as if convulsed by pain." I was tempted to make a pilgrimage to Laracor. Why all this, in one who disavows admira-

tion of Swift, it is not easy to say. Must it not be the influence of the bright association which shone around him, and which is so charmingly illustrated in the letters, rather to him, than from him? As, when Bolingbroke writes in 1730: "Pope is now in the library with me, and writes to the world, to the present and to future ages, while I begin this letter, which he is to finish, to you." There is a note in Scott's Swift, of Bowles, on this subject: "These letters of Bolingbroke, of Pope, and of Swift, which almost set us among the very persons who wrote them, create a melancholy interest. We hear of their acquaintances, friends, pursuits, studies, as if we knew them; we see the process of years and infirmities, and follow them through the gradations from youth to age, from hope to disappointment, and partake of their feelings, their partialities, aversions, hopes, and sorrows, till all is dust and silence." The centre, as Swift seems to have been, of this circle of companionship, could not fail to magnetize any one.

The most painful, hideous narrative is the "Journal to Stella;" not so much in its nasty details (for, as Mr. Thackeray says, "he was filthy in word, filthy in thought, furious, raging, obscene"), as in the revelations of the temper of the man, and the cruelty of making them to a gentlewoman. His very conviviality seems grim, and it is with a smile, rather at the Quaker than the Dean that we read: "Called at Mr. Harley's. The porter told me his master was just gone to dinner with much company, and desired I would come an hour hence, which I did, expecting to hear Mr. Harley was gone out; but they had just done dinner.

Mr. Harley came out to me, brought me in, and presented me to his son-in-law, Lord Dublane, and his own son, and among others, to Will Penn, the Quaker; and we sate two hours drinking as good wine as you do; and two hours he and I were alone." But night and bedtime coming, then "I come home, rolling resentment in my mind, and forming schemes of revenge, full of which, having written down some hints, I go to bed." This was his court-life when he was a Tory leader, managing rival statesmen and guiding policy. Then it was, he laid his head upon a thorny pillow, having dispatched, daily or weekly, packets of nettles to sting poor Esther Johnson. This was in 1710, and, by way of contrast—though the *sæva indignatio* burns up there too—note what he was proud of, twenty years later, in exile, and seclusion, and decay, when Stella was dead, and he had no companion, a deaf, remorseful, proud old man, "the lonely eagle chained behind the bars." What he was then proud of, this letter tells: "My popularity," he writes to Pope, in 1730, "is wholly confined to the common people, who are more constant than those we miscall their betters. I walk the streets, and so do my lower friends, from whom, and from whom alone, I have a thousand hats and blessings upon old scores, which those we call the gentry have forgot. But I have not the love, or hardly the civility, of any one man in power or station, and I can boast that I neither visit nor am acquainted with any 'lord temporal or spiritual' in the whole kingdom." It is on this letter that Dr. Warton has the following note: "We see in it the steps by which this great genius sank into discontent, into



peevishness, into indignity (*sic*), into torpor, into insanity." It may show discontent and peevishness, but surely there are no signs of torpor. The last fall of intellect was very sudden, for the best, the clearest, the most agreeable of all Swift's letters are those after 1736, when he was complaining of a "total want of memory." It was not when at home in Ireland, with the common people taking off their hats to him as they passed, but in London, within the bright radiance of Queen Anne's court, that he used to have the third chapter of Job read to him on his birthday, and think of "the kings and counsellors of the land which build desolate places for themselves."

If a student, led by a stray impulse, will read Swift's life and writings from an American point of view, he will find not a little of peculiar interest. His biographer says, though the authority is not given, that about the year 1707, when Swift was a Whig and a friend of Addison and Lord Somers, it was proposed he should accompany Governor Hunter to America, and be consecrated "Bishop of Virginia." Now, had Swift, with his turbulent spirit, come to these colonies, what a course might his have been, and how different his fame, had the eloquence which was in him been evoked on this stage—a nation, not a party, to applaud the swelling act—instead of the narrow one of Dublin politics; but the offer of such a mitred exile was too closely kin to insult to be submitted to. If made, it was, no doubt, contemptuously declined; and it is curious to see what he and others of his day (the golden age of English literature) thought of us Americans, and, as we may infer, of such a diocese. Vindi-

cating the people of Ireland from some metropolitan grievance, he breaks out, as if unable to control the insolence of his spirit, and the utter scorn with which an Englishman of those days looked down upon us: "It is clear that some Ministers are apt to look from their high elevation on this kingdom of Ireland as if it were only one of our colonies of outcasts in America." Thus spoke the Irish ecclesiastic of those days, reflecting the popular sentiment of the times; and may not the American student find something, even here, worthy of a moment's complacent meditation? In little over a century from the time these words of scorn were uttered by one of England's wisest men, an American frigate, chartered by the charity of these very outcasts, lay at anchor in the Cove of Cork, dispensing bounty to save Ireland from starvation, and the royal standard of a Queen ten times more powerful and a thousand times more queenlike than Queen Anne, gracefully and gratefully saluted American grain-ships hastening through the Irish Channel on an errand of mercy to her subjects.\*

Scorning, or unable, to secure an American mitre, thwarted by the antipathy of the Queen, who never forgave "The Tale of a Tub," Swift took refuge in an Irish deanery; and then it was, that, thrust in exile among a people he detested, he wrote the political works which have immortalized his name. He wrote the "Drapier's Letters," to arouse Ireland, not merely against Wood's half-pence, but their principle; against

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\* A graceful account of this charity will be found in Miss Seaton's charming "Biographical Sketch" of her father, recently issued.

oppression which legislated for her without her consent; taxed her, cut off her manufactures, restricted her commerce, screwed tighter that great engine of imperial tyranny, the Navigation act; in short (and this is the application), did everything to Ireland which, forty years later, made the American Revolution. If ever history suggests a prototype, here it is; the chief difference being, that Sir Robert Walpole was wiser than George Grenville, and Ireland, not America.

The student, reading Swift's almost forgotten volumes in an American spirit, will realize all this; and here, in the dark perplexity of Irish politics, from which, then and now, every one shrinks, will be found a germ of the mighty struggle which created this republic. The statutes which, for years, oppressed America, and which, quite as much as the speculative question of taxation, led to the overthrow of imperial power here, were resisted in Ireland. The machinery of resistance too—non-importation, and non-consumption—was the same. Some of Swift's very phrases, their origin probably not traced, became current coin of American declamation, and were habitually used by the pamphleteers of 1775. The common one of "uniting as one man" is in the "Drapier's Letters;" and there, too, the student will find other sentences and phrases of captivating power, with the ring of those which, a few years later, were uttered in Carpenter's Hall and the court-house of Williamsburg in defiance of the same imperial and imperious authority. It sounds very much like American rebellion to hear Swift say to Ireland: "The remedy is wholly in your hands, and therefore I have digressed a little in order

to refresh and continue that spirit among you, and to let you see, that, by the laws of God, of nations, of nature, and of your country, you are and ought to be as free as your brethren of England." Or again, when, rising to a higher pitch of masculine downright eloquence, his agitated spirit goaded to look toward these "colonies of outcasts" as the place of freedom's refuge, he says: "For my own part, who am but one man, of obscure condition, I do solemnly declare, in the presence of Almighty God, that I will suffer the most ignominious and torturing death rather than submit to receive this accursed coin, or any other that shall be liable to the same objection, until they shall be forced on me by a law of my own country. If that shall ever happen, I will transport myself into some foreign land and eat the bread of poverty among a free people." There was something very like "Brother Jonathan" in the tone of these remonstrances, and yet the courtly writer who has described these wrongs and their redress, who sees in England's commercial treatment of Ireland "nothing but a short-sighted mercantile policy, alike impolitic and cruel, more worthy the monopolizing corporation of a peddling borough than the enlightened Senate of a free people," never recognized in it the foreshadow of the kindred blundering which aroused American rebellion, and made the American Revolution. At the time, too, few or none of those reputed wise, saw the progress of colonial misgovernment and abuse of metropolitan authority.

But there was an observant eye that noted what was happening; for, at the very period when Swift was hurling defiance in the face of Walpole and his col-

leagues, and vindicating the wrongs of his provincial countrymen against parliamentary oppression, there was a poor American printer, lodging in a by-street of London, who was watching the struggle closely, and no doubt laying up, in a mind which grasped and retained everything, the Dean's lessons of resistance for future use in a distant land. During the time when Swift was publishing the "Drapier's Letters" and other pamphlets in defense of Ireland, Doctor Franklin was, on his first visit to England, a vigilant and reflective watcher of the scene before him, and then it was that one of those odd incidents of variety occurred which mark his singular career and brought him in contact with one of the Drapier's nearest friends.

"One of these days," says Franklin, "I was, to my surprise, sent for by a great man, I knew only by name, Sir William Wyndham" (all remember him as the Tory leader of his day, the friend of Bolingbroke, and patron of Swift), "and I waited upon him. He had heard, by some means or other, of my swimming from Chelsea to Blackfriars, and of my teaching a young man to swim in a few hours. He had two sons about to set out on their travels, and he wished to have them first taught swimming, and proposed to gratify me handsomely if I would teach them. They were not yet come to town, and my stay was uncertain, so I could not undertake it. But from this incident I think it likely that if I were to remain in England and open a swimming school, I might get a great deal of money."

When Franklin next returned to England, Swift's

career was run; Wyndham and Bolingbroke were dead; one of the boys whom Franklin had refused to teach to swim was Earl of Egremont, and had succeeded Mr. Pitt as Minister of the Crown; and the muttering of a greater rebellion than Ireland had ever dreamed of, was audible on this side of the Atlantic.

## BOLINGBROKE.

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EVERY student, old or young, has had his spasm of infidelity—a time, long or short, when he thought it a manly thing to be a skeptic. Mine, very long ago, was a slight attack, and I then read, and have now forgotten, Lord Bolingbroke's "Essay, or Letters, on History," which contains the distillation of his doubts. The Bible my father used to read to us—the Bible History (it was a certain dull one by Kempton or Kimpton); the homely engravings of Royaumont, which, especially one of the luckless man with a huge ligneous beam protruding from his eye, won the wonder of my childhood; the catechism which my dear mother taught to me—these were my guardian influences. There were legends of religion in the nurseries of those days, and in them, for me at least, there really "lurked a deeper import" than lay on the surface of truths learned later. In one of the skeptical books of this day, the sentimental difficulty of infidelity is honestly stated: "*Il faut etre bien sûr de soi*," says M. Renan; "*pour ne point se troubler, quand les femmes et les enfants joignent leur mains pour vous dire; 'croyez, comme nous.'*" M. Renan and his followers, and Hegel with his "Almighty Nothing," now poisoning the minds of a large and amiable school in this country, and Theodore Parker, and Comte, at whose door, to my personal knowledge, lies one sad suicide,

the wreck of a brilliant American intellect—all these, no doubt, feel lofty scorn for the women's and the children's prayer, and say they are very sure of themselves. But in their inner hearts they are not so confident as was John Wesley when he said (where it is recorded I cannot say): "When I was young I was sure of everything. In a few years, having been mistaken a thousand times, I was not half so sure of most things as before. Now that I am an old man, I am hardly sure of anything *but what God has revealed to me.*" It has been said of Bolingbroke, to whom my rambling pen returns, that if a reader wishes to test the value of any of his opinions he must inquire whether he is thinking of Christianity or Sir Robert Walpole, for as to them he cannot be trusted, and my notes do not take me in the direction of either.

I now read Bolingbroke's political and strictly miscellaneous writings, not only without prejudice, but with an enthusiasm as to their literary merit which it is not easy to express. Better critics have been equally enthusiastic. "Until I read Bolingbroke," says Lord Chesterfield, "I did not know the extent and power of the English language." "I would have you," he writes to his son in 1751, "read his works over and over again. Transcribe, imitate, emulate if possible. It will be of real use to you in the House of Commons." His style seems to me the perfection of eloquence; and there is a critical theory on Bolingbroke's diction, hinted at by Chesterfield, which is not without significance in accounting for the natural, apparently unartistic, flow which characterizes it. A recent biographer, Mr. Macknight, says, speaking of the lost speeches for



which Pitt mourned: "Far more than almost any other man that ever wrote, St. John's literary works resemble spoken eloquence. They are clearly the composition of an orator who, being prevented from addressing an audience by word of mouth, uses the pen as his instrument, and writes what he would have spoken. To make this resemblance, or rather identity, complete, we know that Bolingbroke disliked the mechanical drudgery of writing; that he could not bear to sit down with a paper before him and the pen in his hand to develope his ideas; that it was his custom to employ an amanuensis, and to dictate many of his literary productions. This habit was evidently formed in the House of Commons; and having learned to make speeches before he was obliged to confine himself to writing essays, the author was merely a transcript of the orator. His compositions, when examined, fully confirm this idea. Their style is, both in its excellencies and defects, thoroughly oratorical; glowing, animated, and vehement, and, if never bombastic, frequently declamatory, tautological, and diffuse. Graceful and flowing as Bolingbroke in the best of his writings is, he not unfrequently tires the reader with repetitions and amplifications to which, when set off by his fine person and pleasing intonations, an audience might always listen with interest and delight. Any one who will give himself up to the spirit of the 'Letter to Sir William Wyndham,' or the 'Dissertation on Parties,' can scarcely fail to form a vivid idea of what St. John's oratory was in the House of Commons. When he wrote, he was addressing an imaginary audience, exciting imaginary cheers, and frequently

defying and assailing a hated rival, who was not at all imaginary; but, whether in youth or age,—while St. John, speaking in the House of Commons, or, as Viscount Bolingbroke, composing the letters to the Craftsman,—still the same unconquered and unconquerable foe.”

We read that, long ago, Cicero wrote at least parts of his Philippics as a pamphlet oration, and one can easily imagine the “Letter to Wyndham” to be a written speech. It is Bolingbroke’s “*Apologia pro Vita Sua*” (its venial egotism, frank confession, and fierce inculpation, not unlike the theological apology of our day), and in it we have the peculiar beauty of his rhetoric in all its force. See how, from time to time, he turns on Harley, and how proudly conscious he is of his own superiority as a parliamentary champion. One is reminded of the octogenarian of our own day, not long gone to his rest, in the passage where he says: “In the House of Commons his [Oxford’s] credit was low, and my reputation very high. You know the nature of that assembly; they grow, like hounds, fond of the man who shows them game, and by whose halloo they are used to be encouraged.”

Every Bolingbroke student has fresh in his memory the celebrated description of the Pretender’s court, where, as Lord Stair said in his rough, familiar way, “poor Harry could not play his part with a grave enough face; he could not help laughing at such kings and queens.” “Care and hope,” writes Bolingbroke, “sate on every busy Irish face. Those who could write and read, had letters to show, and those who had not arrived at this pitch of erudition, had

their secrets to whisper. No sex was secluded from this ministry. Fanny Oglethorpe, whom you have seen in England, kept her corner in it, and Olive Trant was the great wheel of the machine." Then, too, the description of his last interview with the Pretender, which, using it elsewhere, I refrain from quoting here.

There is a word of justice which Bolingbroke's biography, and especially his letters to Swift and Lord Marchmont, prompt. He has hardly had fair play. History and biography, till very lately, have been persistently Whig, and when a Tory, or prerogative man, like Dr. Johnson, undertook to talk of Bolingbroke, party sympathies were acidulated by theological resentments. (I am actually catching the Doctor's style.) St. John's "fell spirit" and Mallet's "blunderbuss" survive when amiable and gentle traits are forgotten. Yet he was attractive, wonderfully so, personally, socially, intellectually. Men were his devoted friends; though by a strange incongruity, while Stella and Vanessa were in love, desperately so, with Swift, Bolingbroke seems to boast of no woman's deep affections, unless it be in his wreck, the pupil of St. Cyr, on whose dying bed he flung himself in an agony of honest grief and begged forgiveness, and who, in her strange French way, once told him, when he was boasting of former gallantries, that he reminded her of an "ancient aqueduct, a noble ruin, in which no water flowed." She clung to the ruin to the end; and among the few agreeable things to be noted in Lord Marchmont's diary,—that dreary record of an old politician's restlessness,—is the frequent and affectionate

reference to his wife. The critical scholar observes in some of Bolingbroke's later letters the influence of his French wife and French residence and association on his diction, in such words as "coalited" and "volupty." But the main web is glorious, magnificent English; and if there be too stately a step for our ambling times, and grander phrases than now we use, we should remember that

" Words have their proper places, just like men.  
We listen to, not venture to reprove,  
Large language, swelling under gilded domes  
Byzantine, Syrian, Persepolitan."\*

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\* Walter Savage Landor.

## CLARENDON.

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LET me break the continuity of time, and turn back to another century. Clarendon is not a prime favourite with any one, and why, it is hard to say; but he is wearisome, and neither the "Rebellion" nor the "Autobiography" interest actively. Yet there are on his pages grand specimens of noble diction. "*Noblesse oblige*" seems to guide his pen. My "Rebellion" is an illustrated edition, and from its pages look those wonderful faces which the greatest of portrait painters has made immortal. Vandyke was needed to illuminate this stately record. There is Lord Herbert, with a charming, loveable face; and Denbigh, Rupert's lieutenant, with the turbaned negro page at his side; and Falkland, looking exactly as Clarendon describes him: "his natural cheerfulness and vivacity clouded, and a kind of sadness and dejection of spirit stealing over him;" and Newcastle, "a fine gentleman, active, and full of courage, amorous in poetry and music," with a face for a woman to fall in love with, and a beautiful white hand with long tapering fingers—badge of a cavalier; and Prince Rupert, and "the Great Marquis;" and a wonderful one of Laud. What a great thing it was for the cavaliers that Vandyke was at hand to paint them! No one can open these volumes without feeling that he is among noble men. But to the book.

What a wild dark picture is that of the unfurling of the royal standard at Nottingham: "According to the proclamation, upon the twenty-fifth day of August" (Clarendon does not disfigure such a passage with Arabic numerals), "the standard was erected about six of the clock in the evening of a very stormy and tempestuous day. The king himself, with a small train, rode to the top of the Castle hill; Varney, the knight marshal, who was standard-bearer, carrying the standard, which was then erected in that place, with little other ceremony than the sound of drums and trumpets. Melancholy men observed many ill presages about that time. There was not one regiment of foot yet levied and brought thither, so that the trained bands which the sheriff had drawn together was all the strength the king had for his person and the guard of the standard. There appeared no conflux of men in obedience to the proclamation; the arms and ammunition were not yet come from York; and a general sadness covered the whole town, and the king himself appeared more melancholic than he used to be. The standard itself was blown down, the same night it had been set up, by a very strong and unruly wind, and could not be fixed again in a day or two till the tempest was allayed. This was the melancholy state of the king's affairs when the standard was set up."

Why, in the dreary days of ours, now happily over, one is struck with the following passage, the reader may guess when he thinks what great lawyers and judges in times of political excitement have held to be "law." Speaking of ship money and the decision of

the Court of Exchequer in its favour, the high prerogative Clarendon says:

“When ship money was transacted at the council board, they looked upon it as the work of the power they were obliged to trust. Imminent necessity and public safety were convincing persuasions; and it might not seem of apparent ill consequence that, upon an emergent occasion, the regal power should fill up an hiatus or supply an impotency in the law. But when they saw in a court of law (that law which gave them title and possession of all they had) apothegms of state urged as elements of law; judges as sharp-sighted as secretaries of state and in the mysteries of state; judgment of law grounded upon matter of fact, of which there was neither inquiry nor proof, and no reason given for the payment of the thirty shillings in question, but what concluded the estates of all the standers-by, they had no reason to hope that such doctrine, or the preachers of it, would be contained within any bounds; and it was no wonder that they who had so little reason to be pleased with their own condition were not less solicitous for or apprehensive of the inconveniences that might attend any alteration.”

One thinks of warfare nearer home, and its victims on all sides, in reading Clarendon's account of the battle of Newbury, where Falkland fell—“a person of that inimitable sweetness and delight in conversation, of so flowing and obliging humanity and goodness to mankind, and of that primitive simplicity and integrity of life, that, if there were no other brand upon this odious and accursed civil war than that single

loss, it must be most infamous and execrable to all posterity." When, too, Carnarvon died—accidentally killed, like the brave Southern chieftain (we may so speak of him now, methinks), who fell at Chancellorsville: "After the troubles began," says Clarendon—and here the parallel we hint at runs closely—"having command of the first and second regiments of horse that were raised for the service, he wholly gave himself up to the office and duty of a soldier—no man more diligently obeying or more dexterously commanding—for he was not only of a very keen courage in exposing his person, but an excellent discerner and pursuer of advantage of his enemy, and he had a mind and understanding very present in the article of danger, which is a rare benefit in that profession. If he had lived he would have proved a great ornament, and by his death the king found a sensible weakness in his army." It is of the slaughter at Newbury that Clarendon says, with pardonable sympathy for his order, and sorrow, somewhat harshly expressed, for the noble blood then spilled: "On which side soever the marks and public ensigns of victory appeared most conspicuous, certain it is that, according to the unequal fate which attends the conflicts of such adversaries, the loss on the king's side was, in weight, much more considerable and penetrating; for, whilst some obscure, unheard of colonel or officer was missing on one side, and some citizen's wife bewailed the loss of her husband, there were, on the other, above twenty officers of the field and persons of honour and public name slain upon the place, and many more of the same quality hurt."

These are sad notes, for Clarendon is in every sense a



grave book. But once only do I recall any approach even to involuntary levity or cheerfulness, and that is in the solemn narrative of the mistake of Lord Portland, which is spread over several pages and is too long to be copied, when the slip of paper was handed to him on which was written, "Remember Cæsar"—meaning a promise to Sir Julius Cæsar, a baronet of that odd name, but was mistaken for a threat of assassination. More than a hundred years afterward, Horace Walpole referred to it in a letter to General Conway: "We want the French," says he, "to put a little vivacity into us. The Duke of Newcastle has expected them every hour; he was terribly alarmed t'other night; on his table he found a mysterious card with only these words—'Charles is very well and is expected in England every day.' It was plainly some secret friend that advertised him of the Pretender's approaching arrival. He called up all his servants, ransacked the whole house to know who had been in his dressing-room, and at last it came out to be an answer from the Duchess of Queensbury to the Duchess of Newcastle about Lord Charles Douglas coming home. Don't this put you in mind of my Lord Treasurer Portland in Clarendon—'Remember Cæsar?'"

## JUNIUS.

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MY "Junius" is an edition in two octavo volumes (such a book is never printed now-a-days), by "Beasley, for Vernon and Hood, 1799." It is on fine, satin paper, illustrated by steel engravings of life-like portraits, such as Sir Joshua and Gainsborough, England's only painters of the past, drew, and which, in spite of wigs, then near their end (for the wig of Sir Joshua is as naught to Kneller's), put the men of the last century vividly before us. There is Charles Fox, coarse and hirsute, exactly the animal man he was, during his whole active life, and never tranquil till, having married his mistress, and in spite of the king become prime-minister, he went to St. Anne's Hill to read Horace, to have Crabbe read to him, and to die. There is another face, not in "Junius," for desultory notes invite digression, which art has preserved, closely associated with Fox. Get it, reader, if you can, and worship at the feet of beauty. It is by Sir Joshua, too, and will be found in one of the volumes of Selwyn—Sarah Lennox, the loveliest woman, except the Gummings, of a century ago; in youth all that was gay and frivolous, in age, the sainted, blind mother of the Napiers. It was through her that the wonderful triumvirate of heroes—England's true Paladins—inherited the blood of Charles the Second and Henry of

Navarre. The hideous Fox and the lovely Lady Sarah are associated in the stale chronicles of obsolete English scandal, and hence, perhaps, I think of them together. Besides Mr. Fox, there is, in my "Junius," the portrait of that most genial of England's public men, whom we Americans are taught to disparage, Lord North, and Burke, with his essentially vulgar Celtic physiognomy, and the Duke of Bedford, and Sir William Draper (who once lived in Philadelphia), and Lord Granby, fat and florid, in a cuirass, and Mansfield and Blackstone, and George Grenville's stony face, looking the man of mere routine he was, of whom some one said that if he were to faint, the smell of an act of parliament would revive him; and then, on the frontispiece, is a tall, graceful form, with the ribbon of the Order of the Bath or Garter, and a cloud hiding his face, and "*Stat Nominis Umbra*" written beneath. In 1799 no one seriously suspected who "Junius" was. In 1870 no one positively knows.

The student of English letters cannot shut his ears to the question, "Who was 'Junius?'" and many have thought there never was a more profitless question agitated. "There is better writing in the *Times* of to-day, when in an angry mood," the late Sir Robert Peel said, "than there is anywhere in Junius." This is all very well; but the letters we still read and admire and wonder at; and there is no demonstration of the author, although more than a century has rolled by since "Junius" as such appeared. He was a short-lived writer, beginning in 1769 and breathing his last in 1772. They were busy years for him.

Young men are apt to read "Junius," for the worst

of reasons, and, nine times out of ten, with the worst of fruits. His style is inimitable, and yet it is imitated. His morals, as a dark, anonymous defamer, were atrocious, and yet the evil example has been largely and mischievously influential. The only safe rule of conduct that any writer, old or young, can lay down, is, never to write a word for which he is not willing to be responsible, or a line, to which, if need be, he would hesitate to sign his name; yet this is the very rule which "Junius" defied. He was proud of being a stabber in the dark, and his was the penalty of carrying a perilous secret through a long and troubled life, and being unable to let it be known after his death for fear of dishonour to his memory. Anonymous writing is not what I condemn, for if condemned, it would be the death of the true freedom of the press, and an assimilation to what is seen in France, and recently, as it seems to me most grotesquely, in some periodicals nearer home. But one need not be irresponsible because anonymous. It is Cobbett, who, somewhere, strongly says, that "every man who writes a word or sentence on a sheet of paper ought to remember he is doing what may live forever;" and, in my poor judgment, no honourable man should write a word for which he is not willing to answer.

We live, in 1870, with a grand-daughter of George III., still a titled sovereign on her secure throne, with a ministry like his, and a peerage and a parliament (albeit reformed), and a church, as Landor said of its Liturgy, "The sanctuary of our faith and our language;" stronger, I, for one, earnestly trust, and purer, I know, than when Lord Chancellor Thurlow, in his

enthusiasm for Horsely, said: "I'll be d——d if I don't make this fellow a bishop!" "Junius" wrote his letter to the king, as near as may be, a century ago—the date being 19th December, 1769—and to measure its merit, which is its boldness, one need hardly carry himself back to those prerogative times when, by-the-bye, no jury would convict of anything but "printing and publishing only." Mr. Burke, at that day no great lover of royalty, for it was before the sorrows of kings and queens had affected him, said "it made his blood run cold;" and reading it now, and looking to the conventionalisms of English society, I am by no means sure that such a letter written to Queen Victoria would not make Mr. Gladstone's flesh creep (of course, Mr. D'Israeli's would) and quicken the sluggish circulation of John Bright. Strange, but true, is it, to my personal knowledge, that Thackeray's social *status* in England was injuriously affected by his Lectures on the dead Georges, although he said nothing but what history recognizes. Divinity still hedges royalty.

The letter to the King is a wonderful specimen of the author's power. I read it years ago, with a boy's admiration of its stilted and impressive rhetoric. I read it now with positive wonder at its impudence and the venomous, deadly satire which bristles in every line. It is not Pascal, who, though bitter in his irony at the Jesuits, is often gentle. It is not Gibbon, with his easy-going sneer at all that is modest, and good, and devout. It is not Burke's sonorous denunciation of "a noble lord." It is more acrid than them all. The venom of his phrases is compacted with a sort of doubting panegyric; and the barb goes home and

rankles. There must have been a wretched night at Kew when George read and explained to Charlotte, or worse still (I really forget if he was married then), to his mother, the Princess Dowager, the withering sneers at the Scotch, Lord Bute, and himself, their victim. "You have still an honourable part to act. The affections of your subjects may still be recovered. Lay aside the wretched formalities of a king, and speak with the spirit of a man and in the language of a gentleman." There is something terrific in his threat to the young king of the defection of his army. Remember, reader, the times when these words were written, and cease to wonder that Woodfall was indicted for libel: "Your distant troops and marching regiments feel and resent, as they ought to do, the invariable, undistinguishing favour with which your guards are treated, while those gallant troops by whom every hazardous, every labourious service is performed, are left to perish in garrisons abroad, or pine in quarters at home, neglected and forgotten. If they had no sense of the great original duty they owe their country, their resentment would operate like patriotism, and have good cause to be defended by those to whom you have lavished the rewards and honours of their profession. The Prætorian guards, enervated and debauched as they were, had still strength enough to awe the Roman populace, but when the distant legions took the alarm they marched to Rome and gave away the empire." If a libel be criminal because it tends to a breach of the peace, surely this was libellous, and Lord Mansfield was not far wrong in thinking so.

My notes do not lead me into the tangled field of

inquiry, where all sorts of weeds and briars grow, as to who "Junius" was. It may go into the category of the *Eikon Basilike* and the *Iron Mask*; for one had better, as I do, accept the Franciscan theory on the authority of those who have studied the question on the spot, such as Lord Stanhope, and Sir James Mackintosh, and Macaulay, and concede Sir Philip to be the man. But there is one belief, or conviction, or suspicion, which tinges this and every theory, that Lord Chatham, who retired to Hayes mysteriously, and thence emerged coincidently with the beginning and end of "Junius," had something to do with it. One man can keep a dangerous secret. But if there be in a secret common danger to two, two can keep it quite as well.

If it were Francis, and I concede him to be the active agent, what a moral does his career, as affected by this secret, enforce! What a warning is here given! He was but twenty-seven when, under other signatures than "Junius," he began to write anonymously. He was twenty-nine when "Junius" began, and but thirty-three when it ceased, and a new career of success opened to him. All was comprised within the narrow limits of less than five years, and yet in a life of nearly fourscore, for he lived till 1818, with varied honours and successes, the secret doings of those five years were the heavy weight which bent his fierce spirit down. "The work of these years," says Mr. Merivale, "was a burden on him for more than fifty." It haunted him in public and private. It stood behind his chair at the dinner-table, and the skeleton, as it were, from the Speaker's chair, faced him in the

House of Commons. "May I ask you one question, Sir Philip?" said a gentleman at a dinner-table. "At your peril!" was the fierce reply. "There is a striking, almost terrible passage in Lady Francis's Recollections"—here again I quote Mr. Merivale—"in which she says that it was the opinion of some of his intimate friends that his hesitation in parliamentary speaking, which was a main cause of his comparative failure, was partly owing to the consciousness of his secret. He set so constant and habitual a guard on his lips, lest some compromising expression should find its way out of them, that the habit remained when the secret was not at all in question." Contrast this misery, for such it must have been, or else a cruel, defiant imposture to be carried beyond the grave, with Sir Walter Scott's good-humoured mystification about his literary secret, and one can measure the distance between innocent and lovely romance, which contributes to the pleasure of old and young, and dark political vituperation; between the genial enthusiast of the border—one of those Scotchmen whom "Junius" loved to denounce and vilify,—and the irritable, vindictive politician who, under cover, was malignant enough to triumph over a father's sorrow for his child in the case of the Duke of Bedford, or a husband's shame in the infidelity of a wife in the Duke of Grafton's. Francis outlived every one of his victims except the King, who was blind and idiotic, and yet he dared not tell the secret.

If Sir Philip Francis be "Junius," then has "Junius" a sort of American relation such as I like to evolve. In the graveyard of a sister city is a stone bearing the



name of Tench Francis, a first cousin of Sir Philip, and for years Recorder of Philadelphia. There, and in Rhode Island, where one was governor and senator, are his honoured descendants. The distinguished name of Tilghman, at the bar, on the bench, and in the military service of our ancient and classic times, is that of one branch of the Francis family. Tench Tilghman was Washington's dear friend and confidential aid, and it may be that, from some hidden depository on this side of the Atlantic—for Sir Philip corresponded freely with his American kinsfolk—may yet come some new light on this ancient puzzle.\*

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\* I note, because it is in an out-of-the-way place, that in one of the numbers of the *Cornhill Magazine*, while edited by Mr. Thackeray, is a curious contribution to the Junian controversy in connection with the burning of the Jesuit books in Paris.

## QUOTATION BOOKS.

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As in every house, we are told, there is a skeleton, and in every doctor's shop a case of instruments for emergencies, mysteriously veiled from vulgar gaze, so in all libraries, and especially if it be one of a writer or public speaker, are there corners where are put away for convenient use, not only commonplace books, happily out of date, but Indexes Rerum, and Burten's Anatomy, and Murray's Hand-books for Geographical illustration, and Lexicons and Concordances (all honour to those immortal C's, Cruden and Mrs. Cowden Clark), a Thesaurus or two, and, finally, "dictionaries of quotation." It depends very much upon their nature whether such dictionaries are good or bad. The young student uses them, and for this end they were first devised, to furnish him with quotations with which to garnish what he writes, and show his scholarship. This is spurious. It is, the poet tells us, the page of knowledge which is

"Rich with the spoils of time."

It is out of the depths of a full mind that bright literary illustrations bubble up to the surface, and any critical eye can detect without fail a got-up quotation, or one which a mere dictionary supplies. Not so the "directory," as it were, which aids memory, and, given

a fragment or sometimes even a word, enables the scholar to find the context. They are not merely valuable, but, as auxiliaries, they are essential to complete literary work. Two of this kind I may venture to speak of—one, Bartlett's, American, and not a new book. The other English, Friswell's, and called properly "Familiar Words." They are both defective, and mainly in this, that they attempt too much, and crowd their pages with "elegant extracts," which are not "familiar quotations." None ought to be admitted except very trite ones, which, by-the-by, need not be there at all unless the writer or speaker who has used them can be indicated. As an illustration of what ought and ought not to be comprised in such a book, I take two examples, haphazard, from each. Mr. Bartlett gives "Fletcher of Saltoun's letter to Montrose" as authority for, "If a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who makes the laws, of a nation." Strange to say, Friswell credits this to the *Edinburgh Review*. He might as well give it to the *Atlantic Monthly* or Lippincott. I cite this as a proper selection, though a defective reference. But when he gives a stanza of an unquotable poet like Montgomery, such as :

"If God hath made this world so fair,  
Where sin and death abound,  
How beautiful beyond compare  
Will Paradise be found,"

he errs grievously, for surely no one but the feeblest clerical orator ever used such stuff. So Mr. Friswell.

He gives from Wordsworth's "Personal Talk," of which few have heard,

" Maidens withering on the stalk,"

and omits the original from "Midsummer Night's Dream," where Theseus tells Hermia that

" Earthly happier is the rose distilled  
Than that, which, withering on the virgin thorn,  
Grows, lives, and dies in single-blessedness."

Then, Mr. Friswell commits the enormity of italicizing what he considers the "quotative phrase," and, nine times out of ten, misses it. This was once before done by the late Bishop Doane in an edition of the "Christian Year," in which he undertook to italicize what, according to his notion, were the beauties, and a wretched business he made of it—the episcopal and the common judgment very widely differing. Two quotations are omitted by both these compilers which, if not familiar, ought to be so: from a neglected scene in "Macbeth:"

" Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell ;"

and from "Agonistes:"

" The vulgar only 'scaped who stood without."

From these hand-books of the art the transition is natural—writing as I try to do, under suggestive impulse—to the art itself—what may be termed the philosophy of quotation. It is worth a thought, for no one claiming to be expert in original writing and criticism can be insensible to its value and its varied uses.

There are some quotations, from good books too, that are so stereotyped as to become nauseous. There are

some so interwoven in common talk that they have ceased to be quotations. Of the former, Colley Cibber's "aspiring youth that fired the Ephesian dome" (though, by the change of a single letter, it might have a clever application to a celebrated widow of the same spot in Asia Minor, from whom descend

"Ceux de la Prudoterie  
Antique et célèbre maison,")

and "the bourn from which no traveller returns," and "suspicion always haunts the guilty mind," and "the winter of our discontent," and that one which the newspapers have seized, "discoursing eloquent music." These are as trumpery as the favourite line from the "Star-Spangled Banner," or Sir William Jones's "What constitutes a State," or Mr. Longfellow's "Silvery clarion," or those dreary "mills which grind slowly." They come from very empty vessels. Of the class of those which have interwoven themselves in common speech are Paine's "Times which try men's souls," or Dean Swift's "United as one man." It is one of the great tributes to Shakespeare that, though three hundred years old, he is fresh for use to-day, and we often talk Shakespeare without being aware of it.

It by no means follows that a common, hackneyed quotation may not be effectively used. A new application of an old "saw" is often a success. One at this moment occurs to me of the capital use of an exceedingly common passage in Shakespeare, from a play frequently performed, and with which every one is familiar. In Mr. Webster's speech in reply to General Hayne, in which, by the way, in view of the grave

occasion, he seemed to scorn aught below Shakespeare or Milton, "Sonorous metal breathing martial sounds," in the passage in which (Mr. Calhoun in the chair) he taunted—for it was a taunt—the South, and the vice-president especially, with their disappointment on General Jackson's promotion, as it were, of Mr. Van Buren, he said, with grand emphasis, altering, which is permissible, one pronoun :

"Upon thy head they placed a fruitless crown,  
And put a barren sceptre in thy gripe—  
Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,  
No son of thine succeeding."

So, Sheridan never did a cleverer thing than when he misquoted "Macbeth" on the Scotch members deserting Mr. Addington—

"Doctor, the Thanes fly from thee!"

While, let me say incidentally, Mr. Webster abounded in quotation out of his rich stores, for the words of the Bible and Milton and Shakespeare were literally heaped up within him (as all know who have enjoyed joyous social intercourse with him), his great rivals had none of it. Mr. Calhoun thought illustration from without unworthy of his severe logic, in this resembling Mr. Fox, who, though full of classic scholarship to overflowing, rarely used it exorbitantly—using this word in a strict sense—and Mr. Clay, who had no book learning, when he tried it made a dismal failure, as where, in one of his reported speeches, he gave the doggerel of

"How hard is the lot of the poor galley slave."

John Randolph was rich in brief fragmentary citations, and John Quincy Adams, with his *Ormuzd* and *Ahrimanes*, his *Ebony* and *Topaz*, was pedantic and formal, and never graceful.

But it is on the pages of the reported speeches of the Bar and Parliament, still unparalleled, of our mother land, that we find the best illustrations of this art of quoting. There, speakers are able and not ashamed to quote the classics, and woe to him who stumbles into a false quantity. We read that, long ago, Pultney and Walpole, after fierce battles on politics, were reconciled by a friendly discussion of a dactyl or a spondee. If with us, in the Senate for example,—by violent presumption our most scholastic body,—a Latin phrase beyond "*sine quâ non*," or the more thrilling "*E Pluribus Unum*," were to be used, more than one would scratch his head in perplexity, and many an eye become more lustreless. It would be literally the vain scattering of pearls. In England, it is done without pedantry, and listened to without scorn. Witness Mr. Pitt's speech on the slave trade, in 1792, made, says tradition, after a long night session; and, just as he reached his peroration, in which he contrasted the bright day of Europe with the struggling dawn in Africa, the morning sun broke through the windows of St. Stephen's, and he said :

"Nos primus equis oriens afflavit anhelis,  
Illic, sera rubens accendit lumine Vesper."

Now and then, a bit of Latinity, cleverly used, puzzles parliamentary scholars, as when, in his speech on municipal reform in 1836, Lord Holland, a thorough

scholar though poor speaker, said: "The works of man, my lords—the noblest, the boldest, the most sublime—crumble beneath the mouldering hands of time; the mountains and hills are washed away by the slow workings of the stream or shivered by the force of the elements; but the calm river flows on perpetually from year to year and from age to age.

"Quæque immota quies nimium premit ista peribunt,  
Sed qua perpetuo sunt agitata, manent."

No one knew whence the apposite quotation came. It continued to worry and perplex its listeners for a year. Sir James Graham, in February, 1837, rather sneered at it as "a monastic pentameter," and at last Mr. Hobhouse discovered it, Lord Holland enjoying the joke hugely; he found it in a mediæval historian—Janus Vitanus—of whom your annotator freely confesses he never heard.

Lord (then Mr.) Brougham had a peculiar knack of quotation—mingling admirably the classics of the living and the dead. In his speech for Queen Caroline, in his dissection of the Italian witnesses, one can imagine the thunder in which he fired upon them, first a passage from Cicero and then one from Shakespeare. "I trust," said he, "there are in Italy, as everywhere, most respectable individuals. I have myself the happiness of knowing many Italian gentlemen in whose hands I should think my life or my honour as safe as in the hands of your lordships. But while '*Sunt in illo numero multi boni, docti, prudentes qui ad hoc judicium deducti non sunt: multi impudentes, illiterati, leves, quos, variis de causis, video concitatos.*'



Verum tamen hoc dico de genere Græcorum; quibus jusjurandum jocus est; testimonium ludus; existimatio vestra tenebræ; laus, merces, gratia, gratulatio proposita et omnis in impudenti mendacio.’”

And then putting into the mouth of his client's Italian slanderers Iachimo's dark words, he said:

“Away to Britain  
Posted I in this design.  
Mine Italian brain,  
'Gan, in your duller Britain, operate  
Most vilely; for my vantage excellent;  
And to be brief, my practice so prevailed  
That I returned, with simular proof enough  
To make the noble Leonatus mad,  
By wounding his belief in her renown  
With tokens thus and thus; averring notes  
Of chamber hangings, pictures, this her bracelet  
(O, cunning, how I got it!) nay, some marks  
Of secret on her person, that he could not  
But think her bond of chastity quite cracked.”

Here he paused, for the divinity which hedges kings and princes regent, stopped him on the edge of the jealous husband's denunciation of himself:

“Ah! me, most credulous fool,  
Egregious murderer, thief, anything  
That's due to all the villains past, in being,  
To come!”

Let me note one other quotation of Brougham's, neither Latin nor poetry, but from the prose—always more difficult to handle—of his mother tongue. In defending Lord Durham's policy in the House of Commons in 1840, he read a passage from Robertson, where one of Columbus's officers is spoken of as ex-

ceeding his instructions. It thus concludes: "Gasca hastened"—(*here loud cheers interrupted him*)—"to the scene of action, and, without either money or troops, utterly quelled the rebellion."

Of classical quotations (of which I fear the reader has had enough), one of the most graceful is that related of Lord Carteret, on whom, when holding a court as lord-lientenant, Swift bustled in and rudely asked him how he could do so and so. He good-naturedly replied, and with it quenched the Dean:

"Res dura, et regni novitas me talia cogunt moliri."

Sir James Mackintosh said the best Latin quotation ever made was by Leibnitz, on hearing of Bayle's death, and imagining one of the rewards of his candid spirit in the other world. He quoted the words of Mœnalcas in Virgil's Eclogue:

"Candidus insuetum miratur limen Olympi,  
Sub pedibusque nubes et sidera."

Mackintosh himself made a beautiful use of homely poetry when, writing a letter of consolation on Robert Hall's religious insanity, he quoted Burns:

"For yet the light that led astray,  
Was light from Heaven."

To return for a moment to Parliament and the Bar, for notes take me hither and yon. Fox rarely quoted; Burke, often but elaborately; Canning, gaudily; but no one in a more peculiar, homely, telling style than he of whom a woman has written, "His charm was a sort of gay, lovable, openness, which is the precise reverse of what Frenchmen call *morgue*"—Mr. Wind-

ham.\* In his celebrated speech in defence of bull-baiting—the very memory of which is enough to send Mr. Bergh to a premature grave—he said: “Of the difference between the jolly bull-baiting peasant and his demure censors, I can only say :

“Tom struts a soldier, open, bold, and brave,  
Will sneaks a scrivener, an exceeding knave.”

Or in his attack on the ministry for the Peace of Amiens, he said: “I find but two faults with these people, described in lines I once saw written on a window-pane in a country inn :

“Of faults poor women have but two :  
There’s nothing good they say,  
There’s nothing right they do.”

Now and then, a quotation is ruined and made grotesque by elaboration, as when Mr. Wirt, an orator of very questionable taste, in arguing a *quo warranto* as to the right of a clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Duncan, in Baltimore, to a church from which he had been ejected, said :

“This Duncan  
Hath borne his faaulties so meek, hath been  
So clear in his great office, that his virtues  
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against  
The deep damnation of his *taking off*.”

Far better was Horace Walpole’s or George Selwyn’s rather equivocal one in a letter to Sir Horace Mann

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\* The late Miss Emily Eden, daughter of Lord Auckland.

on the marriage of the young lady to the old physician, Doctor Duncan, in which he made her say :

“Wake Duncan with thy knocking. I would thou couldst.”

It is in the same letter Walpole says (and to me it seems the perfection of written wit), speaking of the revolution in Denmark, when Matilda was imprisoned and Struensee murdered: “The queen has gone to Castle Cronenberg, and *Struensee to David Rizzio.*”

The late Sir Robert Peel, in one of his speeches on the Reform Bill, though I am unable from memory to say where, speaking of some real or imaginary disgrace to England, quoted with great effect Cowley’s vigorous lines :

“Come Roman, Saxon, or come Dane!  
Come the eleventh plague, rather than this should be.  
We’ve mourned, we’ve sighed, we’ve wept,  
We never blushed before!”

Lord Chatham had a playfulness in his quotations not congenial, one would think, with his stately gait and solemn utterances, as in one of his American speeches, when speaking of those troublesome colonies, he said, from Prior :

“Be to their virtues very kind,  
Be to their faults a little blind.”

But then, in a letter to his wife, whom he usually addresses as “My noble love,” referring to the Tory bishops, he fiercely writes :

“Yes, I am proud, I must be proud, to see  
Men not afraid of God afraid of me!”

The old Divines of the Church of England had a very reverential way of "quoting." In the body of their sermons, they cited only the Holy Scriptures, rarely resorting even to patristic literature, but filled the margins with abundant and most graceful classical citations, prose and poetry intermingled, though apart. One occurs to me as an exception to this, for it is in the text. Barrow, in his sermon on the king's "happy return," in a graceful, courtly strain, says: "As the good bishop, observing St. Austin's mother, with what constancy and passionateness she did pray for her son, being then engaged in ways of error and vanity, did encourage him saying, '*Fieri non potest, ut filius istarum lacrymarum pereat,*' so we may hopefully presume that a prince will not miscarry for whose welfare many good people do earnestly solicit." It is in this sermon we detect the source whence, unconsciously, was drawn Cato's "flourish in immortal youth," for the Divine of the Restoration says: "The Graces, those goodly daughters of Heaven, smiling always with a never-fading serenity of countenance, *flourish in immortal youth.*" It was of Charles II.'s ingratitude that the preacher wrote:

"Te majus optavit rediturum, Carole, nemo;  
Et nemo sensit te rediisse minus."

In our day Sydney Smith drew upon himself, without, for a wonder, meaning to do so, an universal laugh, when, in his sermon on the queen's accession, he attributed the "*Nunc dimittis*" to the Psalmist, and it was then that a Tory critic rebuked his unclerical

levity by a quotation, which I cite, not for its justice, but its aptitude :

“ Old man ! fall to thy prayers ;  
How ill white hairs become a fool and jester ! ”

It is the same periodical critic—the *Quarterly Review*—(and where will better writing be found than on its pages, from Scott and Gifford to Lockhart and Elwyn, one of the latest numbers containing a criticism on “Lothair” worthy of its best days?)—which furnishes me my penultimate quotation,—in its way a gem; the italics are not mine. When, in 1839, the Melbourne ministry forced the young queen to change the ladies of the household and surround herself with Whig petticoats, the *Quarterly* said :

“ Time, we are told, teaches a shepherd to distinguish his sheep by their individual physiognomy; but her majesty has no such experience, and can know her new flock only by the *Melbourne mark* :

“ Omne cum *Proteus* pecus, egit altos  
Visere montes.”

I have spoken of the difficulty of successfully quoting prose either by pen or tongue,—greater, of course, with the latter,—yet once these ears heard it effectively done, no matter when, no matter where, for it is of the living I now write. On the trial of a woman, and a mother, too, for the murder of her husband, in front of the prisoner’s desk were seated their little children—pretty, attractive, innocent-looking girls. No reference was made to them, except by one of the counsel, who, at the end of his summing up, read (and this was a bold forensic experiment), and without a comment,

this passage—almost too long to be cited here—which the scholar will recognize as from Mr. Hope's ghastly "Anastasius:"

"I had left a storm gathering in Egypt, of which I since have thanked God I witnessed not the bursting. Already, previous to my departure, the consequences of the scarcity had begun to appear in many places; but it was only after I left the country that the famine attained its full force; and such was, in spite of every expedient of human wisdom, or appeal to divine mercy, the progressive fury of the scourge, that at last the Schaicks, and other regular ministers of worship, supposing the Deity to have become deaf to their entreaties, or incensed at their presumption, no longer, themselves, ventured to implore offended Heaven, and henceforth only addressed the Almighty through the interceding voices of tender infants, in hopes that, though callous to the suffering of corrupt man, Providence might still listen to the supplications of untainted childhood, and grant to the innocent prayers of babes what it denied to the agonizing cry of beings hardened in sin. Led by the Imans to the top of the highest minarets, little creatures from five to ten years of age there raised to heaven their pure hands and feeble voices, and, while all the countless myriads of Cairo collected round the foot of these lofty structures observed a profound and mournful silence, they alone were heard to lisp from their slender summits entreaties for divine mercy. They only begged that a general pestilence might speedily deliver them from their lingering and painful agony; and when from the gilded spires throughout every district of the im-

mense mass, thousands of infantile voices went forth the same instant to implore the same sad boon, the whole vast population below with half-extinguished voices jointly answered, 'So be it!' The humble request God in his mercy granted."

The speaker closed the book without a word of his own, and the effect was produced.



## BOOKS OF TRAVEL.

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THE first books of travel I ever read were "Robinson Crusoe" (not the didactic "Swiss Family Robinson," but honest Daniel Defoe's) and "Lemuel Gulliver." And my "Gulliver" (it seems but yesterday, though there have been many yester-years) had a map of Liliput, and one of Brobdignag, too—a sort of Australia of islands—with the degrees of latitude and longitude "from Greenwich" duly marked; and I incline to think I believed it, and looked for them in the atlas. I am sure I had some faith in Robinson's island, for it was in the days when the "Arabian Nights" (a beautiful little prayer-book edition) was smuggled into church to be stealthily read, as it seemed

"A goodly place, a goodly time,  
To read as of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid;"

and if there be a man with soul so dead who can read without emotion the discovery of Friday's foot-prints on the moist sand, I pity and pass on. It, and "George Osborn lying dead with a bullet in his heart at Waterloo" are the two great startling points of fiction, terribly like reality.

Then, came narratives of African adventures; and

here let me pause and note how thorough and complete is the efficacy (we can hardly measure it), politically, socially, or poetically, of the post-diluvian curse on this great continent. Africa has two slight fringes of civilization and interest, North and South, and this is all: Egypt and what was once Carthage at the North; and Natal and a lovely paradise, the natural garden of the ferns and the lilies, the jasmines and the geraniums, the Cape Colony at the extreme South. All else, for sixty degrees of latitude, one-sixth of the old world's surface, from Mogador to Orange River, is desolation and degradation, and what is convertible with degradation, the supremacy of the negro race.

And Africa,—if personal memories may mingle with one's books,—I have seen. It was the giant gateway through which my Eastern travel passed.

On the morning of the 7th of September, 185—, after seventy days of sea monotony, with no sight of mother earth except the sand and pebbles picked up by the sounding-lead off the coast of Brazil, my uneasy slumbers—for in approaching land neither passenger nor navigator has quiet rest—were broken by a message to come on deck,—for “there was something worth seeing.” And there was! There, in the dim, orange-tinted dawn of a spring morning—for September is spring in those latitudes—with the moon sinking in the west, and the morning star over the mountains in the east, was Africa, the “Cape of Storms,” or, in that gentler phrase—one of the most beautiful I know of which has survived so long—the Cape of *Good Hope*. There was Africa. And as I gazed on the scene of beauty, and as the Table Mountain and ranges of

hills—for the dim ridges seemed to rise to vast distances to the north—swelled up before me, I could not but think of the mysterious doom which haunts this continent, and of the translated miseries it has engendered, and of the freight of sorrow and suffering which has been sent across the ocean. And then, in the light of that poetic dawn, I thought of the heroic adventurer, who, more than three hundred years ago, came hither in a humble craft as the herald of occidental conquest, and of the sublime imagining of the poet of Portugal, of the Genius of Asia rising from the ocean, and, as if prescient of the future, warning him away. We drew near the land, and the anchor dropped and the salute was fired, and there was mysterious silence in return; and the tragic message came to us that a bloody mutiny of black men against white men, of servants of an alien race against their masters, had burst forth, and that the great fabric of British empire in India was tumbling down in bloody ruin. There were not left at the Cape artillerymen enough to fire a salute. And we went ashore and rested in a wilderness of flowers; for such is Southern Africa, the land of the ferns, and the bulbs, and the geraniums, and the roses, with the orange-trees in full blossom, and the camellias just over. What idea had I, or have you, gentle, well-educated reader, of Southern Africa and this, its capital? Hottentots and Caffres and Fingoes and elephants and ourang-outangs were my ideals. I certainly never dreamed of a picturesque town with wide, well-shaded streets and public squares, and libraries, and botanic gardens singularly beautiful, and omnibuses and hansom-cabs, and brilliant equipages,

and pretty, bright-eyed, fair-cheeked women; certainly not of an easy journey into the interior over good roads carried up steep mountain slopes by gentle gradients, and lovely villages, such as Paarl and Wellington, and vineyards like good Mr. Cloete's at Constantia, and hearty welcomes in one's mother-tongue everywhere. Not that the traces of the early colonists, the Dutch, are wholly effaced. Far from it. The village names attest their existence yet, and he who drives into Stellenbosch—a perfect Paradise of white roses—at two o'clock in the afternoon, and finds, as I did, all the inhabitants asleep, will not doubt that Dutch repose is still unbroken. There, too, one sees the little jasmine-covered cottage, at Feldhuysen, whence for four years, from this end of habitable creation, Sir John Herschel “gauged the southern heavens.”

And it was of Africa my boy-books of travel told me. They were two; one, the adventures of an American, who, on an unlawful voyage, probably to pick up a few involuntary emigrants, was, or said he was, wrecked on the western coast of Africa. His name was Riley. He was captured and wrote a book about his adventures—an octavo, illustrated, like some others in colder regions, with pictures of places never seen and possibly non-existent. It was bought greedily and read credulously; but alas! the discovery was soon made, and there was agony in the awakening, that not one word of it was true. It has now very much passed out of memory.

Next in order came James Bruce, who travelled just a hundred years ago, and gave to the amazed world the narrative of his exploration of the sources of the

Nile. The history of this book—it is in seven volumes, and Mr. Astor has it—is curious. Its fate was, at first, to be discredited, and then, after a long interval of eclipse, to be vindicated. Bruce was a Scotchman (Macpherson Fingal's contemporary), and there was a time in England, and America too (and Mr. Buckle seems disposed to revive it), when a Scotchman could do nothing right and say nothing true. Hence, he was denounced and discredited; and it is only of late, since Lord Napier of Magdàla with his soldiers broke in the side-door of Abyssinia, and Baker and Speke carried their unblushing wives through all the naked horrors of Nubia, and that mysterious itinerant entity, Dr. Livingstone, made his pleasant trips up or down (I really do not know which) the Zambesi, it has been made manifest that, according to his lights, Bruce told the truth. Commenting, as recently as 1840, on the Indian story told by Dr. Morse (Jedediah, not he of the telegraph) of the savage who, returning from Washington to his tribe, told them of what he had seen—"canoes holding seven hundred sailors," and "wigwams where a thousand people met to worship the Great Spirit;" and was shot down as "too great a liar to live," an English writer says truly and wisely: "Before the civilised world passes its hasty sentence on this wild tribe for their obdurate incredulity and injustice and cruelty, we feel it but justice to the red man merely to whisper the name of James Bruce, of Kinnaird." Nor is his the only case of long deferred, or, as it were, intercepted justice to the truth of a traveller's story. Marco Polo, after eight or nine centuries (remember, reader, I am away from books and

may sometimes be wrong a century or two) of discredit, is now recognized as authority, and Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, who, in a phrase familiar to every student of dramatic literature, was denounced as "the type of liars," is now admitted to have told the simple truth about the East. So was it with Bruce. The pleasure-seeking traveller, who sails over a calm and safe sea in four or five days from Malta or Brindisi to Alexandria, and up the Nile to the cataracts, in a covered boat with a French cook, knows naught of Bruce's trials when steam was not, and the Mediterranean had worse dangers than Gregales; and when African corsairs, by the consent of Christendom, plundered from Jaffa to Gibraltar. There were no hospitable Khedives then. Yet he travelled bravely on, this whole-hearted Caledonian; and when his work was ended, and his triumph won, he tells simply the story of success. It was not the loud cry of the Greeks when they saw the sea from the mountains of Trebizond, or of the Germans in other days than ours, when they caught a glimpse of the Rhine; but it was the gentle meditation, the venial exultation of a brave man, rejoicing at a great result:

"I saw immediately below me the Nile, strangely diminished in size, and now only a brook, with scarcely water to turn a mill. I could not satiate myself with the sight, revolving in my mind all those classical prophecies that had given the Nile up to perpetual obscurity and concealment.

'Arcanum natura caput non prodidit ulli,  
Nec licuit populis, parvum te, Nile, videre.'

"I enjoyed the triumph which, by the protection of providence, I had gained."

These honest words were written on the 24th November, 1770, just a century ago, and the great river flows on, and truth is vindicated.

After Bruce and Africa, was a long void of this sort of migratory reading, when, suddenly, there came a new call for it. In 1825, only forty-six years ago, it became necessary for him who writes these lines to learn something about the Isthmus of Panama, a transit as well understood now as the Fulton Ferry. It was then as obscure a region as, before we bought it, was Alaska. No one had been there. No one ever wished to go there. A voyage round the Horn or through Magellan's Straits (all honour to his memory!) was preferable to that dismal depth. Porto Bello, odd misnomer, and Omoa, and Chagres, and Cruces, have a miasmatic sound, and Admiral Hosier's ghost seems to haunt the accursed region. Has the reader forgotten, and, if he has not, they are worth reproducing, Glover's fine lines :

“ All in dreary hammocks shrouded,  
Which for winding-sheets they wore,  
And with looks by sorrow clouded,  
Frowning on that hostile shore :  
On them gleamed the moon's wan lustre,  
When the shade of Hosier brave  
His pale bands was seen to muster  
Rising from their watery grave ;  
On the glimmering wave he hid him  
Where the Burford reared her sail,  
With his ghastly crew beside him,  
And in groans did Vernon hail.”

Literally the only guide-books which could be found were old Ulloa's quartos, and we, who expected to

make the transit, studied how the Spaniard, centuries ago, paddled or poled up the little river among the alligators, and scrambled on mule-back across the Sierra to the peaceful sea. Now, Omoa and Chagres are no more, Aspinwall, a name redolent of the Fifth Avenue, is in their place, and a railway—soon, alas for stockholders! in its turn to be superseded—spans the mountains. Nor was it much better with Mexico. As late as the year I speak of, the best itinerary was Humboldt, and yet his high science hardly made books of travel or of guidance; so that, down to 1824, when Mr. Poinsett wrote a little tract about it, Mexico was virtually unknown. One pauses in wonder at Humboldt (oh, that his private letters had never been printed!) in his American wanderings, nor is there anything in technical poetry finer than his description of the midnight cry of the Indian guides on the levels of the Andes. “*The cross bends!*” And here let an actual traveller note that the constellations of the Southern hemisphere, including the boasted crucial one, with the feeble star at the end of the cross-piece, spoiling its symmetry, bear no comparison to the bright variety of the North. I am fully of the same mind with Miss Eden, who, in her pleasant letters from India, recently published, says: “However, though we sail slowly, we are in our own Northern hemisphere again, which I mention that I may twit one of our friends who told me, when I was coming to India, that I should never see the ‘Great Bear’ again. Dear old beast, he came in sight again the night before last, looking handsome and friendly, worth all the



Southern crosses and scorpions. It is something to know one's own stars again."\*

Then, some thirty or forty years ago, beginning with a feeble rill, came rushing upon us the great tide of books of European travel by Americans, and American travel by English men and women. The last angered us terribly for awhile, but latterly we have come to think they did not judge us unfairly, and that much they said was true; nor does any rational American feel a moment's irritation except when, in cases like Mr. Dickens, now deified by booksellers' frankincense, who, after being welcomed with an enthusiasm which, however absurd, he could not complain of, turned, and slandered and ridiculed us to the full extent of the evil genius of caricature.

Professor Silliman's, and the book of an amiable Quaker named Griscom, were the first and best of American gossiping travels abroad, and, though obsolete and forgotten now, have a certain value as records of what the transatlantic world was, or to our eyes seemed, half a century ago. Then broke out the disease of travel-books. Not a clergyman, spending a few months abroad at the expense of his flock, and threatened with mild bronchitis or incipient tubercles, but wrote his two duodecimos, and duly recorded sea-sickness, with devotion interjected, the custom-house vexations, as if there were none at home, the cosy breakfast at Liverpool, and Chester Cathedral. It is an actual branch of American literature, begin-

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\* Published in "*Temple Bar*," for 1870.

ning, as I have said, with Silliman, and ending, it is to be hoped, with Bellows. In this chapter of dry *immortelles*, Mrs. Stowe stuck her unlucky "Sunny Memories." Among books of European travel by Americans, I recall but two, perhaps three, which are now readable, or have any value, and they are the works of accomplished and unspoiled men, not clerical,—Mr. Hillard's "Italy," Mr. Wallis's charming little book on Spain, and perhaps, though it is many days since I have read it, Alexander McKenzie's "Year," in which I recall his description of dancing with a blind girl at Madrid—the best defense of waltzing ever made.

Travel-books of later years are of a different tone. They are no longer personal gossip, but something far higher. To see the improvement, look at those which are mere personal narratives—Lord Dufferin's "Yachting in the North;" Lady Duff Gordon or Miss Frere's journeyings; Miss Martineau's Eastern Life—admirable till she goes to Palestine and wraps herself in the cold atmosphere of skepticism; and Curzon's Armenia, and Monasteries of the Levant. All these are fascinating, and to read them makes one wiser and better. Our own John L. Stephens, whose gentle, bright face and winning manner come back like a pleasant dream, wrote delightful books of intrepid travel, but, somehow, they seem, even in the city of his birth, where booksellers once petted him, to be forgotten. His hand raised the curtain of the Yucatan mysteries, and when death struck him down, no one has seemed willing to look for them again. The world, as known to the moderns, has few unexplored pathways, but there are some; and then, too, there are those of

which the interest seems inexhaustible, although the track is beaten. Of such, to my mind at least, is the cradle of the human race, mythically and historically, the valley of the Euphrates, and that other mountain region of the cis-Caspian where Ararat stands and the ark rested. A great outcry was raised, years ago, when Lord Elgin rescued the frieze of the Parthenon from the robbers and runagates of modern Greece, but no whisper was uttered when Mr. Layard brought the Nineveh bulls from the swamps of Mosul. Interest still clings to old Mesopotomia. The best and most complete book of travels in the language describes that region, and is well worth study. It is Colonel (now General) Chesney's voyage down the Euphrates, published ten years or more after the journey was made. Next to that—hardly a book of travels—Sir Emerson Tennant's "Ceylon."

Here, on the threshold of the great insular East,—the Straits of Malacca, and Sumatra and Java, the Eden of the Indies and Borneo, over which the brave spirit of the British Rajah floats in sorrow for ineffectual enterprise,—I stay my steps and spare the reader.

## MEMORIES OF THE EAST.

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FROM books of travel, the transition is natural to the memory of one's own distant pilgrimages, and if, as has been often said, the man of action is socially more attractive than the man of books, an episode of travelling garrulity—a little bit of venial egotism—may be pardoned to a student. The dismal narrative accredited to Lord Macartney, though written by Sir George Staunton, but recently dead, of the fruitless embassy to Peking, more than seventy years ago, was a study, as Lord Amherst's with his romantic shipwreck is a memory, of boyhood. The latter has its mature associations too. In the summer of 1852, under the guidance of one of England's most scholarly men, it was the writer's fortune to visit Knowle Park, the antique seat, in Kent, of the Dukes of Dorset, and to see Queen Elizabeth's bed, and what is much better, among other treasures of art, Reynolds' great portrait of Burke in the prime of his fame, and Mrs. Abingdon in all her loveliness. The historical dukedom is now extinct, and the ancient mansion vacant. Into this family, the Lord Amherst of China, the son or grandson of *our* historical Sir Jeffrey, had married, and was then (if I mistake not) living in a modest cottage near by. In five years from that time, the writer was in

the East himself, and in China, too. May he venture on some scattered memories and dim impressions?

There is a strange feeling in being confronted for the first time with that gigantic dreary entity, Paganism, not Mohammedanism, which is a religion, but mere negative Paganism. For the Mussulman, or the Parsee, one has a sort of respect. He is at least sentimentally devout, which a Chinese, or Japanese, or Malay, never is. The contrast is obvious everywhere. It shows itself in substance and in trifles. Standing, one frightfully hot day, on the piazza of the consular residence at Aden, that dreary spot at the mouth of the Red Sea, where it only rains once in two years and on which a green leaf is never seen, and gazing on the wilderness of rock and sand and cinders, to find something pleasant to look upon, my eye was attracted by a Mohammedan sentinel pacing on a parapet. At a certain hour, probably noon, he laid his musket on the ground and, kneeling, prostrated himself, with his turban almost buried in the sand, toward Mecca, the prophet's tomb, for, by a sort of magnetism, they all know its direction, and made his silent adoration. This was striking. It was picturesque. It was, in a certain sense, devout, and until then, in all my wanderings in Pagandom, it had never been my lot to see anything like "devotion."

The Chinese certainly have none of it, and the Japanese very little. There are in Japan some religious ceremonies in Buddhist temples which were impressive—mainly so from their strange resemblance to the ceremonial of the Church of Rome. At first sight, it might be supposed to be the actual sacrifice of the

mass. But the great intellectual community of China—for such it is in all the elements of shrewdness and cunning and industry and energy and education, its common schools and competitive examinations very much resembling some other intelligent and irreligious communities we know of—rejects devotion absolutely and entirely. The most degraded order of humanity is the priesthood, the most disregarded objects are the idols. This was one of the thousand puzzles of this odd land. Everything is perplexity. Ask a Chinaman who reverences his ancestors, if he believes they exist in any state of being, that he will after death go to them or they revisit him, and he will look with blank amazement at you and utter some platitude about “universal benevolence.” There is sometimes hinted at a sort of diffused immortality, by which the soul of the departed “branches” in three directions, one remaining with the body, one with the votive tablet put up in its honour, and the third, the subdivision least cared for, votatilizing itself into the world of spirits. So with their care of the dead; the huge coffin is part of the furniture of every house. It is so constructed that without inconvenience it can be retained for years, or until the propitious moment and the propitious spot for interment be found, and then it is buried with honour, not in the ground, but on its surface, over which an arch is thrown and soil placed, and where the flowers and the weeds grow in frightful luxuriance. It is one vast burying-ground, and yet not sacred in any sense, and no idea of an immortal spirit seems to enter into their cold rhetorical sentimentalism about the dead. So again with

their idols and their temples. They are elaborate and grotesque, and, in a strange sense, ornamental ; but no one venerates and no one cares for them. Thus it is everywhere. On one island of the Chusan Archipelago, five miles long by one broad, there are one hundred temples all in decay and ruin, and that, too, from no appreciable decline of the faith they represent, but from the strange and inexplicable inconsistency I have alluded to. The wayfarer is put to lodge and eat in holy temples, and in the north of China I have one day seen Englishmen playing skittles, and, on Sunday, attended divine worship according to the forms of the Church of England in the very shadow of hideous Buddhist idols, the Chinamen around caring as little for the desecration as the idols themselves. Every Chinese idol, however, has a hole in the back of the neck to permit the god to go in and out at his pleasure, and it may be the idol was "in vacation" when these improprieties were committed. While in Mohammedan, or Persian, or Christian lands, the desecration of a sacred building by infidel insult would be resented as frightful sacrilege, one might, in a Chinese joss-house, commit any irreverence or indecency, not only with impunity, but with absolute and most contemptuous indifference on the part of the believer. And yet, around it, such as it is, hangs a kind of venerable association, and through its dark, stony surface, refracted and distorted threads of gentle radiance—some good and humanizing influences—may be detected. Five centuries and a half before the Christian era, about the time when the handwriting on the wall told Belshazzar his empire's fall, when

the Tarquins reigned in Rome, and Solon gave laws to Athens, a Chinese philosopher wrote words which have survived to this day, and now give faith and doctrine to four hundred millions of intelligent human beings. "Four hundred millions," says a modern writer, "think of it! What does it mean? Count it night and day; without rest or food or sleep, you continue the weary work; yet eleven days have passed before the first million is completed, and more than as many years before the end of the tedious task is reached." For the mental and moral guidance of these and the myriads who have lived and read in the last twenty-four hundred years, Confucius wrote. I have seen his birthplace and reputed tomb,—the legendary spot of China, one of the few striking promontories its flat coasts exhibit,—and it tasks one's widest conception to measure such an influence as this humble philosopher has exercised. His system is less one of religion than of ethics and economy, though it has taken the place of religion. His political maxims commend themselves to common sense, reason, and justice, and have exerted, as all testify, a happy influence on the government and people of China. The leading principle of government is that, no doubt, which has so long maintained the integrity of the empire, a central authority, exercising as little local and individual influence as possible, and a strict respect for what, in our dialect, was once called "State rights"—local municipal independence. I say some gentle, humanizing rays enliven this twilight of morality. Confucius's system, for instance, taught obedience to parents and love to brethren; respect for the aged,



for magistrates, and for all superiors; courtesy and friendship among equals, and kindness toward inferiors. The virtue of filial reverence is predominant in the East, and looking at it and the wonderful longevity of this empire, we may well believe that "honouring father and mother" has made their days long in the land which the Almighty has given them. Nowhere will you see more tenderness to children than in China, and yet—here is another puzzle—nowhere, it is said, is infanticide more common. I have seen a Chinese father nursing his sick or wounded child with a tenderness that would put a heartless mother in Christian lands to the blush. There are in all the cities of China, foundling hospitals, like those of Paris and London, with wickets where the babe is deposited and the bamboo (for the bamboo does everything in China), to give notice before the poor mother flies into darkness, perhaps to return, as in Christian countries (for the great maternal heart beats everywhere), to be hired as a nurse for her abandoned child. The charity which this phase of Paganism teaches, founds hospitals and dispensaries where, as here, young physicians are emulous of place for the sake of practice, though the mode of dispensing remedies is rather different, for, in China, the patient has a variety of prescriptions presented to him, and then draws lots for the one he takes.

And when I speak of the distortion, the refraction as it were, of pure religious truth by this oriental theology or philosophy, there is one familiar to every student and traveller which is curious: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," Christian

inspiration taught eighteen hundred years ago, and five hundred years before, Confucius had laid down his rule of morals: "Do *not* to others what you would *not* have others do to you;" a let-alone principle eminently Chinese.

In China—unlike India, where castes and classes rule—the visible head of religion, as of secular authority, is the Emperor, and around him, as chief-priest, hangs much that is graceful as well as not a little which is grotesque. What they call "deity" is approached by the chief magistrate, who soon, to their vision, becomes clothed with the attributes of the divinity with whom he communes. As high-priest he performs, among many others, the beautiful ceremony of welcoming the spring and ploughing the land in the presence of his court and subjects. As intercessor, he offers up prayers for the relief of the sorrows and sins and sufferings of his people, one of which, as recently as March, 1853, in time of bloody civil war, has a ring of gentleness and pious sympathy which sounds pleasantly in the ear.

"In the first decade of the present moon," says the *Pekin Gazette*,—the government organ, as it were,—“when the prayers for grain and the great sacrifices are offered, we intend to proceed in person to the front of the altar, and, after a night of watching and fasting, reverently offer up our heartfelt supplications that our people may once more enjoy repose and perpetually cease from civil war and strife. Reflecting upon the distresses of my people, some of whom have had no means of obtaining a livelihood, we have again and again blamed ourselves. I am filled with appre-

hension and humbly entreat august heaven to pardon my offences and spare my poor people!" This, I repeat, has a sweet and gentle sound, and who shall say if, instead of the clamour of brutal and exultant fanaticism, such a voice of humble contrition could have been heard from Christian lips not very long ago in this our land, it would not have been listened to?

The *Pekin Gazette* is "the government organ." It is so strictly. It has all the characteristics. It praises all the government does. It publishes all the imperial edicts and official bulletins. Any one who happened to be in China in time of war had a chance of knowing something of dispatches from its "War Department," such as the Chinese had the privilege of reading, as it were, through their "Associated Press." I was the involuntary witness of a battle in the north of China, when the English and French assaulted and, with some slaughter on the part of the Chinese, carried the Peiho forts. It was a bloody and disastrous rout. The "War Department" at the capital rose to the occasion and instantly issued a bulletin announcing a great and "decided" victory, attributing the surrender of the forts, not to the enemy's arms, but to "an unusually high tide, which washed out the garrison." Not only have they a government newspaper, but there is annually published what we call a *blue-book*, in which are printed the names of all the officials with their salaries, and they have a mode of compensation which might possibly be introduced with advantage in other lands. They give their office-holders certain specified salaries, and then a further sum, described in their blue-book as "a virtue-preserving

addition," to secure them from temptations, which (only in Eastern lands, of course) are supposed sometimes to influence public servants.

But to return to the imperial authority. As the vicegerent of Divinity, even according to the Chinese notion of it, the Emperor, except on rare occasions, is a mysterious and secluded being. No profane eye is allowed to see him. No outside barbarian has had a glimpse of the imperial recluse for seventy years, when Lord Macartney was taken to Peking. Lord Elgin and the allied forces, in 1861, got near enough to plunder and burn his summer palace, but he was far away on the confines of Tartary, and though the strong hand of occidental power has solved the great difficulty of the sanctity of the capital, the western ambassadors are as far, practically, from seeing the Emperor as if they were idling, as of yore, at Canton or Macao. It is really divinity which hedges this king. Mr. Burlingame, who is supposed to have seen everything, saw not this.

One other word on the religious aspect of the extreme East.

From the soil of mere intelligence, unchastened and unsubdued, in China as elsewhere, have sprung the inevitable fruits. We know it in our country, that in those regions where the subordination of the intellect to mere authority, and especially authority in matters of religious faith or sentiment, is resisted, there what may be described as whims or vagaries of intellect, absurd credulities of all sorts, are sure to grow in rank luxuriance. Everybody knows in what part of our land, table-turning, and spirit-rapping, and

spiritual mediums, and all this brood of monstrosities have their growth, and it is unquestioned truth that, long ago—not centuries, for such absurdity has not the sanctity of age, but years—the turning of tables by the imposition of hands; the creation, by contact, of spiritual communication; talking to the absent, if not the dead, and having correspondence with them, was in fashion, and is yet, among the shrewd, long-headed, money-making, infidel Pagans farther east. Anomalous and ricketty as this great Celestial empire seems, there it stands, and there it is likely to stand, while the active powers of western civilization are powerless to affect it or to sustain themselves. Look for a moment at the experiments of the past. In 1497 Vasco de Gama landed in India and planted an empire there. The poet of Portugal celebrated the deed in immortal verse, and a great colonial power was founded in the East; and yet the whole of this enterprise is frustrated, and all that Portugal now holds in Asia are the little sorrow-stricken peninsula of Macao and that other once gorgeous city on the coast of Malabar, Goa. Goa, once called the golden,—where the aged De Gama closed his glorious life, where Camoens sang and suffered,—is now one vast and grassy tomb where a thin and gloomy population seem spared only to chant requiems for its departed souls. “But,” says a modern writer, “though Portuguese dominion may never revive in the East, so well were its foundations laid that its language has survived, and if, in the eventual triumph of Christianity, a Catholic church should be formed in India, Portuguese will be the language of the church wherever it extends.” And so should it

be, when you remember that the great mission to the Indies in the fifteenth century of Xavier and Loyola, whose footsteps I seemed to tread everywhere, was begun under the patronage of Portugal. But her colonial empire is gone, and heathen China stands.

Spain and France fared little better. All that the former has is her colony of the Philippines; while France, which, little more than a century ago, threatened to absorb all Hindostan, has now but two patches of territory—Pondicherry in the Carnatic, one hundred and six miles square, and the little island of Bourbon in the Indian Ocean.

And yet heathen China stands, and stands to puzzle us. Thus is the puzzle fairly stated by an exceedingly clever English writer of our own time:

“In a country where the roses have no fragrance, and the women no petticoats; where the laborer has no sabbath, and the magistrate no sense of honour; where the roads bear no vehicles, and the ships no keels; where old men fly kites; where the needle points to the south, and the sign of being puzzled is to scratch the antipodes of the head; where the place of honour is on the left hand, and the seat of intellect is in the stomach; where to take off your hat is an insolent gesture, and to wear white garments is to put yourself in mourning; where there is a literature without an alphabet, and a language without a grammar, one need be surprised at nothing.”\*

Pardon this wandering, and let us go back to books.

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\* Wingrove Cook.

## THE PRAYER BOOK.

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START not, reader! this is not theology or anything kindred to it. It would be the height of folly to write theology now-a-days, when the *Modern Thinker*, dressed in all the colours of the rainbow, is flourishing his wooden sword about, and is sure to knock over any credulous clown who believes, as I do, in what was taught me at my mother's knee. There are, in this autumn season, ugly nests filled with honeyless, stinging insects, which it is dangerous to disturb. Indeed, the mother's knee must soon be out of fashion, in an age of enlightenment, when reputable men and women tell us, in print, that prostitution is better than maidenhood, and "a woman may take as many husbands in succession as her fancy dictates." There were pure mothers once; and they taught their young children sweet, homely lessons out of this little volume, called "The Common Prayer Book." It is, however, only critically that a layman should write about it. Landor said "it was the sanctuary of our faith and our language," and it is to the latter and its story, these notes relate.

Here, then, is a little volume of scarcely two hundred pages, of perfect English, which, created as English in sound, though black-letter in form, more than three hundred years ago, before Shakespeare's first play was

printed and performed, is as fresh as if written yesterday. It is not even old-fashioned; and when, as here in America, an attempt was made to modernize it, it has been damaged. Open it at random—take any prayer or exhortation, the familiar “Dearly Beloved,” or the “Declaration of Absolution,” feebly whittled away in our American imprint, and read it aloud, and observe how fresh it is. Change a word and it is hurt. There are clergymen (I knew a bishop once) who imagine they know the service by rote, and try to recite it *memoriter*, and a sorry time their hearers have of it. The jar caused by the substitution of a new word for any one that is familiar, is misery. One might as well alter Shakespeare.

It is this very familiarity which is its charm. The Roman Catholic boasts, as well he may, that go where he will, his mode of worship is uniform, and the immortal language in which it is embalmed never varies. The Anglo-Catholic cannot say as much; but, as Mr. Webster said grandiosely of the drum-beat, the Prayer Book of England encircles the globe and binds its Christian humanity together. There is no English or American man-of-war or merchantman on whose deck, if prayer there be, it is not used, and its simple, plain, inoffensive words, breathing no intolerance, have conquered the scruples and prejudices of the most captious dissent.

Looking at it æsthetically, the advantage, I will not say of any form, but of this form of prayer, will hardly be disputed. Those who are accustomed to what is called extemporaneous prayer, which, nine times out of ten, is committed to memory, and is always—with rare excep-



tions it has never been my good fortune to meet—more or less rambling and incoherent, a sort of hortatory address to the Almighty, will not question the artistic superiority of such a liturgy. This is shown by its universal adoption on emergencies. Take, for example, two notable proofs of this—the Burial Service, the grandest collocation of words in the language, actually dramatic in its force and pathos, and the “Form for Family Prayer.” Dissenters almost uniformly use the one, and had much better adopt the other. The awkward oral panegyric on the dead—the story of ancestry, parentage, birth, and education—which is properly excluded from liturgies, and is always listened to with impatience, I am aware, survives; but when the mourners come to the churchyard and reach the grave, the familiar “I am the Resurrection and the Life,” or those grander words, “Man that is born of woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery,” rise up solemnly, as if the grave were speaking, or come down gloriously, as uttered from on high. So with family prayers. Weary is the suffering of him who has to make or listen to a new extemporaneous prayer for a family’s welfare every morning and night. What dismal iteration! What spasmodic efforts at variety! The English Prayer Book contains no form of family prayer—the idea of daily public service being there held—but who that has ever heard it, according to the American form, among those he loved at home, and then again, like home-bred melody, among strangers at the very antipodes, will doubt that there is magic in a familiar form of words?

But, says the dissenter from liturgical service, there

is no earnestness and feeling, no sympathy between suppliant and listener, in this or any set form. The truth is just the reverse, from the mere fact that all know what is to be said, and are not waiting for some *tour de phrase* from a clever "minister." Go into a country or a village church,—for there is too much diffusion in huge city edifices, suited only to cathedral service,—where every one is known to every one, and all are neighbours, and listen when the clergyman, without previous notice, utters the solemn words: "O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, our only help in time of need, look down, pity, and relieve thy sick servant for whom our prayers are desired;" and every thought turns at once to the vacant seat, and the individual sufferer is known, and the silence, as it were, speaks in earnest hope that the priestly prayer may be listened to; and when, at last, the dread alternative is spoken, "or else give her" (I choose to fancy it a dying wife and mother) "grace so to take thy visitation that, after this painful life ended, she may dwell with thee in life everlasting," and every heart throbs in sympathy for a desolated home, and the work of prayer is done. Words, though formal, often unlock the heart. It was once the writer's lot, at the end of the cruel war which desolated so many homes and frustrated so many hopes and crushed so many hearts in this our land, to attend church, according to the Episcopal form, in Richmond, then in ruin. The Federal authority was restored, the "rebellion" at an end, the graves at Hollywood covered with fresh flowers, the tears for Stuart and the gallant Pegrams (Richmond's children) not dry, the Confederate Presi-

dent a prisoner charged with vicarious crime. The Chief Magistrate of the United States was prayed for, decorously, according to the Ritual; but when, in the Litany, the supplication was uttered, "That it may please thee to preserve all sick persons and young children, and to show thy mercy upon *all prisoners and captives*," common as the words seem, there was a thrill in every heart—a thought of the manacled captive at Fortress Monroe, their old friend and neighbour, whose courage in the darkest hour had never failed—which showed how a familiar "form" of prayer can stir the heart.

It is an old story, the sailor's burial at sea, but one that never is without its pathos; and as "Dust to dust, ashes to ashes," has its echo, never heard without a shudder, from the earth the sexton's spade scatters on the coffin, so, from the solemn cry of the master-at-arms, "All hands to bury the dead!" to the words, "We commend his body to the deep," and the shotted hammock slips with a dull splash into

"The vast and wandering grave,"

no one hears it unmoved, or fails to think the eloquence of the liturgy unequalled.

We know of the Prayer Book and the Burial Service in fiction and in history, and that history our own. In fiction, the good old Baron of Bradwardine, after humanly "sending out his patrols and pickets, reads the Evening Prayer of the Established Church" on the eve of Preston Pans; and Camilla, in Miss Burney's pretty but obsolete novel, dying, as she thought, in a strange inn, revives on hearing her lover's voice read-

ing the offices for the sick. Mr. Trollope, irreverent limner of the clergy, has no jest for the Prayer Book, though he speaks of Archdeacon Grantley's dressing-closet, "where he keeps his boots and his sermons!" In history: Washington read prayers night and morning at Fort Necessity; as did Doctor Duchè before the Continental Congress, though not, I trust, in the sprawling fashion in which American art has painted him. The "Burial Service," for its prayers are "few and short," was read over poor Moore's uncoffined remains on that dark January night, sixty years ago, at Cornùña. It was uttered over the proto-martyr of the middle colonies in the revolution—the Jacobite, Hugh Mercer—in the classic ground of old Christ Church; and on the lawn at Mount Vernon, when, on the 16th of December, 1799, a little schooner anchored in the Potomac firing its simple salute the while, Washington sank to rest. But never was it more picturesque than at an enemy's grave during that same revolution.

When, in the autumn of 1777, Burgoyne's army entangled itself in the fastnesses of the upper Hudson, and disaster lowered heavily around him and his gallant army,—for such, bating his Hessians and kindred Indians, it was—General Fraser fell mortally wounded by an American rifle-shot. He lingered, as we all know, in Madame de Riedesel's hut, where she and her children had taken refuge, and died, and was buried on a hill near by. The collection of officers at the funeral attracted the attention of the hostile artilleryists, and a sharp fire was concentrated on the spot. Then was it that the exhortation of the Liturgy, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable," had a new significance, and

General Burgoyne (the name sounds sadly and pleasantly in our ears just now over the sea-grave of the 'Captain' and the rescue of the Empress), a brilliant and accomplished writer, thus describes the scene in a "Narrative of the Northern Campaign"—which, reader, if you have never read, get at once :

"The incessant cannonade during the solemnity; the steady attitude and unaltered voice with which the chaplain officiated, though frequently covered with dust which the shot threw on all sides of him; the mute but expressive mixture of sensibility and indignation on every countenance; these objects will remain to the last of life on the mind of every one present. The growing darkness added to the solemnity. To the canvas and the pen of history, gallant friend, do I consign thy memory! It will live long after the frail record of my pen shall be forgotten."

One other historical illustration of my text occurs to me—the familiar anecdote of Lord, then Mr, Denman, when acting as counsel for Queen Caroline. Her name being excluded from the Ritual in the regular supplication for the royal family, as if she were past praying for, Mr. Denman, with bitter pathos, said they dared not suppress the Litany for "the desolate and oppressed."

The critical and historical literature on the Prayer Book—I say it with due reverence—is a scandal on the Anglican Church. Nor has the deficiency been supplied by the American branch. The dreary curse of "preaching," and preaching platitudes, rests upon the clergy. Spoiled by this very necessity, as well as by effeminate association, and the grateful incense so pro-

fusely burned, especially in this country, under the clerical nose, they are not, as a general rule, accurate students, thorough scholars, even in their own professional learning, and never critics. There is no American book of scholarship on the Liturgy, and until Mr. Blunt's admirable annotated edition of 1866, too expensive to be within perusal and easy reach, there was none that I am aware of in England. Its rich and luminous pages tell all one needs to know.

It is a curious record, this of the Prayer Book, and though extending with precise knowledge over eight hundred years,—for the “Salisbury Use” is dated A. D. 1085, twenty years after the conquest,—not at all an obscure or intricate one. It illustrates, better than anything, the struggle for independence which Christian Britain always maintained. St. Augustin's great difficulty was to bring the free church he found in England under the absolute control of Rome, and, as to its forms, he failed. The *Angli* were very militant and rebellious *Angeli*. Latin, the language of the Continental church, was not the vernacular of England. It was never, but exceptionally, spoken there, as in ancient days it was in Portugal and Spain and Italy. The Saxon and Norman element was in chronic revolt. Tyndale's Bible was the first expression of this; and then, in slow time, woven out of the beautiful Latin and Greek liturgies, came the Prayer Book. The traces of the mixture of the ancient languages—those immortal twins of Greece and Italy—are singularly graceful. The two most beautiful prayers, the “Our Father” and that of the golden-mouthed Saint of Antioch, are Greek, while the Psalter and most of the prayers are

Gallican Latin, and the Collect for Grace is as old as the sixth century.

And it was, as all know, a native-born Englishman, and a thorough churchman,—not a semi-Puritan, like Ridley or Latimer (for the hand of the Puritan never beautified anything),—who, at the end, created the Prayer Book. Of him, the not over-reverent historian of our times says, and I cannot refrain from quoting it:

“No plunder of church or crown had touched the hands of Cranmer; no fibre of political intrigue, or crime, or conspiracy could be traced to the Palace of Lambeth. As the translation of the Bible bears upon it the imprint of the mind of Tyndale, so, while the Church of England stands, the image of Cranmer will be seen reflected on the calm surface of the Liturgy. The most beautiful portions of it are translations from the Breviary; yet the same prayers translated by others would not be those which chime like church bells in the ears of the English child. The addresses, which are original, have the same silvery melody of language and breathe the same simplicity of spirit. Edward VI. died before the Liturgy could be tampered with; and from amidst the foul weeds in which its roots were buried, stands up beautiful the one admirable thing which this unhappy reign produced.”

This was in 1549. Then came 1552, with the influences of the ultra-Reformers, shrinking from sacraments and priestly offices; and then Queen Elizabeth, neither the one thing nor the other. But the Prayer Book of Cranmer is the *opus princeps*. It is the “Martyr’s Monument.”

Looking at it, let me repeat, not theologically, but artistically, one cannot but regret a part of the Reformers' purgation. It may be heresy—it may be superstition—but it is “poetry,” to pray for the dead, for the repose of the soul, for the tranquil passage over the dark water. Bishop Hall deliberately recognized it as sound practice, and the ancient office is preserved, though not in use. It is very simple and very beautiful. Of it all, but a small and doubtful fragment is left to us. No one who has lost a friend, be it yesterday or years ago,—a wife, or mother, or loving child,—can suppress utterly an emotion and a hope when in the prayer for the church militant he hears: “We also bless thy holy name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear.” This is all the rough, rude thing called “Reformation” has permitted to survive. Had the one green leaf or flower been seen, it would have been rooted out.

In exactly a century, the Liturgy, which had withstood Puritanism, as it were, insinuated, encountered it triumphant, and, as ever, intolerant, and by an ordinance of Cromwell's Parliament, in 1644, the Prayer Book was absolutely suppressed in public, and it was made penal to use it in private. In 1645, Presbyterianism, in its most austere form, was established, and “to preach, write, or print anything in derogation or depraving of its directory,” subjected the offender to discretionary fine. Then came the Restoration, and the ineffectual Savoy Conference, and finally the revision of 1661; and the story of the Anglican Liturgy is told. The revisers spoke, gravely but not harshly, of the recent past. “By what undue means,” say they,



“and for what mischievous purposes, the use of the Liturgy, though enjoined by the laws of the land, and those never yet repealed, came, during the late unhappy confusions, to be discontinued, is too well known to the world, and we are not willing here to remember.”

Our American deflection from the standards, though a necessary, was a clumsy one. The political crisis required changes in those parts of the Liturgy which were political, and here it should have ended; but 1785 was not a propitious moment, with the fires of civil war hardly cooled, and there were then no very thorough scholars in the church, or, unless imported, in the land, or what may be termed refined critics in the unepiscopal body which had to assume the function of revision. There was the mild and tolerant wisdom of White and Prevost, sure to avoid or round off, as it were, any sharp points. Doctor William Smith, of Maryland, formerly of Pennsylvania, a good scholar, but a rugged, perverse, and disappointed man, seems to have done most of the work. The convention made war upon adverbs and pronouns and particles. As if for the mere purpose of change, they suppressed throughout, the good, substantive pronoun “them,” even where it occurs in the Lord’s Prayer, a transcript of the text of Scripture, and substituted the feeble adjective “those.” In the Litany and prayer for the President (as if in anticipation of to-day, when no such special supplication is needed) they struck out “wealth” and put in “prosperity.” They omitted the duty of the bishops in consecration “to punish all unquiet and criminous men;” and, as if they detected satire in the

prayer for the clergy that he alone could help them "who workest great marvels," altered it by a periphrasis. They spoiled it almost everywhere, and yet, by an odd oversight, left untouched a single word in the Litany which, but for success, would have had an awkward sound for some of them. That word is "rebellion."

It was originally an unnatural graft on the Anglican liturgy. "Rebellion" is not now, and never was, a moral wrong. It is the worst of Jesuitism to say that criminality depends on events. "Sedition and privy conspiracy" are sins from which all may pray to be delivered. "Rebellion" was in no ancient liturgy. "It was added," says Bishop Cosin, almost with a blush, "for obvious reasons, in 1661"—that is, when Charles II. was restored, and the regicides, living, were punished, and, dead, were disinterred; and revolt against "Sacred Majesty" was a crime indeed. It never ought to have had a place in any form of prayer, and least of all in ours. Good Mr. Seabury, who but nine years before had piloted the King's troops, Hessians and all, in pursuit of "Rebels" through Westchester County, must have grimly smiled, and Odell, from his retreat in Nova Scotia, chuckled, when the fathers of the American Church at Philadelphia determined to retain the Jacobite prayer against "rebellion." There it is; and, no doubt, during our "late unhappy confusions" both sides prayed lustily to be delivered from this deadly sin.

The convention tried, in their own words, "to make such alterations as to render it consistent with the American Revolution and the constitutions of the sev-

eral States" (there were no United States then) ; and when they had done their work, they seemed to think they had done too much, for, said they, in their deprecatory address to the Anglican bishops, " We hope you will not disclaim a branch of your church merely for having been, in your lordships' opinion, if that should be the case, rather more closely pruned than the separation made absolutely necessary." There were American mitres in suspense then, and it was necessary to be very deferential. Nor was it in vain ; for, thanks to the good sense of Mr. Pitt and the Primate, the well-deserved honour was bestowed ungrudgingly upon the two who, though "rebels," were *American* churchmen, and Doctor Seabury was compelled to go northward and resort for his promotion to all that were left of the Scottish non-jurors.

Such is "The Prayer Book," critically and historically. Of it, hundreds of thousands are printed and sold every year in our land. Its value cannot be overestimated. It is the safeguard of ecclesiastical discipline. It is the "cheap defence" of the church. It is the buoy for which the pilot steers, and it shows where the anchor lies. There is scarcely a home among the educated where it is not to be found. Its words are familiar in every ear. Its forms hallow our daily life. It tells, in its ceremonies, of birth, and baptism, and marriage, and death. The blushing bride and the happy lover hear it. The mother prays from it over the cradle of her babe, and with it the child follows the parent to the grave.

## AUTOGRAPHS.

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THE lineal though degenerate descendant of an autograph-hunter, pure and simple, I take to be a collector of "postage stamps." Numismatics have some real interest, but mere autograph hunting is the lowest form of innocent intellectual pursuit. Nine times out of ten, the collector is ignorant of the true value of what he so eagerly pursues, knows little or nothing of them whose scribbling he covets, and accepts on faith the signature of any one he is told is famous. Then, too, according to my observation, a professional autograph-hunter is of very easy morals. An autograph is a sort of "umbrella" of literature which any one has a right to appropriate, and, for its sake, many a precious volume has been mutilated by the spoiler. Yet, within limits, autographs have an interest and a charm. When Angelo Mai in the Vatican, or the German archæologist in the Illyrian monastery, unrolled (if that be the process) the palimpsests, and, as it were, looked the buried Cicero and Pliny in the face, one envies the emotion. The unravelling of the charred papyri in the Neapolitan museums, worthless as thus far the results have proved, and the disclosure of Greek characters written eighteen hundred years ago, and slowly rescued from the cinders of Vesuvius, is noble autograph-hunting. Then, too,

the other German scholar who found a manuscript of the gospels (autograph of somebody) on the summit or the slopes of Mount Sinai, dating as far back as Constantine, and unknown to general Christendom for fifteen centuries,—from A. D. 331 to 1844,—surely he had his reward. One must be a very clod who can look without at least curiosity on the signatures of Guy, or, as he wrote it, Guido Faux, before and after the rack—every letter quivering with recent agony, and the surname a desperate and illegible scrawl; or Milton's Lycidas at Trinity College; or the letter, which Mr. Hillard tells us of, from the Venetian ambassador to Pope Sixtus, giving the news of Henry IV.'s assassination by Ravalliac. But for these, some knowledge and not a little imagination are required, and to neither, according to my experience, does the technical autogramaniac pretend.

Faith in genuineness is needed. Like the fair one of antiquity, an autograph must not even be suspected. But here let me for a moment pause and ask, by what line are the territories of what we do and do not believe divided? Where, in the domain of the past, are we to cease to believe in the genuineness of a relic, or an autograph as a kind of relic? Nobody doubts the genuineness of the huge integuments which encased the hands of Mr. Lincoln on that Good Friday night when Booth shot him in the theatre, and which are religiously preserved at Washington. The bullet which, in 1848, killed the poor Archbishop on the Paris barricades, is enshrined at Notre Dame, and no one questions it. The stump of a pen with which was signed the treaty of Paris, a century ago, is preserved. The

robes worn by Thomas à Becket, when he came to grief at Canterbury, are to be seen at Sens; and at Milan is a lock of Lucrezia Borgia's hair ("only a woman's hair," as Swift said of poor Esther Johnson's)—that which, Leigh Hunt somewhere tells us, "survives like love—so light, so soft, so escaping from the idea of death, with which we may almost look up to heaven, commune with the angelic nature, and say, I have a piece of thee, not unworthy of thy being now." As I have said, the tresses of the beautiful poisoner of history and Donizetti survive four hundred years. Where, then, on the records or among the traditions of the past, do we enter the region of doubt and denial? and is the Church of Rome absolutely irrational in asking for faith in relics of more dim antiquity?

It has never fallen in my way to see truly antique autographs. The Solemn League and Covenant, I have seen. There are few of any value here, except what was once Mr. Teft's and is now Dr. Sprague's. A little collection lies before me which, if the reader will pardon such trifling, is, or may be made suggestive. They cover more than a century of stirring times. But that they are suggestive, they would be valueless, at least to me. They are autographs and holographs.

Just a hundred and fifty years ago—for he died, luckily for himself, in 1721—lived a public man, with an unmusical name; a minister of the crown, over whom, when death came to the rescue, hung the penalty of parliamentary impeachment. Such was James Craggs, the friend of Stanhope and of Pope, and Secretary of State to George the First. Around his memory hang the dismal crimes and follies of the South

Sea scheme, but, as I look on a letter with the date and post-mark of November 5, 1720, just before the explosion and the shipwreck, with the address to "John Newsham, Esq., Member of Parliament, Warwickshire," and "J. Craggs" in the corner, there comes from the grave of the Past a strain of familiar melody, falling gently on the heart, and making one willing to forget the jarring agonies of his close of life :

" Statesman, yet friend to truth, of soul sincere ;  
 In action faithful, and in honour clear ;  
 Who broke no promise, served no private end ;  
 Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend ;  
 Ennobled by himself, by all approved ;  
 Praised, wept, and honour'd by the Muse he loved."

Coincidentally, or nearly so, with Craggs, comes a holograph of Lord Chesterfield—a letter to David Mallet, dated at "Bath, March ye 9th, 1748." It is deliciously characteristic, stately in its high-bred courtesy, and yet graceful ; with none of the patronizing tone of the peer to the relatively humble author and editor ; doing or promising a kindness readily, and mingling with it that sort of pleasant gossip which is so well adapted to put parties on an equality. Then, too, familiar names of literature and politics float pleasantly on its surface, and bring back the old-fashioned associations of that day—Pelham, then Prime Minister, and Littleton, and Gray's friend West, and Thomson of the "Seasons." It begins with pleasantry and genial sympathy, Mallet suffering, it seems, from an ophthalmic ailment. "I can say to you now without a compliment what I could not with truth have said to you

some years ago—which is, that I do not know a pair of eyes in which I interest myself so much as I do in yours. I use the word ‘interest’ very properly, for it is from the use of your eyes I expect the best employment of my own.” Then follows, as if to take away or defer anything like patronizing, gossip as to his own political retirement, and the speculations of the “coffee-house tables” (for clubs were not) on the subject. One sentence I quote, not so much for its cleverness, but for some peculiarities of expression which, we may regret, have gone out of fashion. I preserve the spelling and the capital letters. “Lord Chesterfield would be Cæsar or nothing, says a Spirited Politician ; There is something more in this affair than we yet know, says a deeper. He expects to be called again, says a third. While the silent Pantomimical Politician shrugs everything eventually, and is sure not to be disproved at last. They are all wellcome, let them account for my present situation how they please ; this I know and they do not, that I feel and enjoy the comfort of it.” He then tells Mallet what he had done for him—how he had interceded with the cautious Prime Minister. “Our conversation ended, as all those conversations do, with general assurances on his part that he would do for you when he could. None but he who gives these assurances can know the reall value of them ; for he could not say more if he meant to realize them, and he would not say less if he did not.” This letter is, I believe, in print ; but as it lies before me, with its faded, gilt-edged paper, and its perfectly fresh ink, shed a hundred and twelve years ago ; its clear, distinct handwriting (the importance of which he so



urged upon his ungracious boy); its prodigal use of consonants; for the wretched clipping system was not then in vogue—his “affraid” and “transmitt” and “wellcome” and “reall” and “faithfull,” it is no great strain on fancy to go back to South Audley Street, where Chesterfield House, as he planned it, still stands intact, or to Bath and the Pump-room and Beau Nash, and see again this kind-hearted, brilliant, high-spirited gentleman,—for such he was, in spite of Mrs. Oliphant,—and to breathe the radiant atmosphere which habitual courtesy generated around him. Honour, I say defiantly, to the memory of a patriot, when patriotism was rare; a statesman, a scholar, a loving, anxious parent,—for such he was, as if to repair an aboriginal wrong to a most ungracious boy,—and the writer, in my poor judgment, of the best English prose of his times—better than Bolingbroke’s and as good as Swift’s! There have been many real or manufactured death-bed sayings, but none more genuine and characteristic than his. “I die content,” said Wolfe at Quebec. “Kiss me, Hardy!” whimpered Nelson in the cockpit of the *Victory*. “I still live,” said Mr. Webster. “Is this death?” were the words whispered by poor angelic Margaret Davidson to her mother, and ejaculated by George the Fourth to Sir William Knighton, terrified at the coming reality. But “Take a chair, Dayrolles,” from Chesterfield’s dying lips, was the last and fitting expiration of a kind and gentle spirit which had so long

“Shone in the small, sweet courtesies of life.”

Passing down the stream of time, as thus illustrated,—for their handwriting is before me as I write,—

Lord Bute, and the Duke of Grafton, and "Jemmy Twitcher," and Wilkes (beautiful penmanship), and Lord Temple, and George Grenville, and the twin suicides Charles Yorke and Lord Clive, my eye rests on two, who, contemporaries and rivals, rise grandly from the low level of their times, William Murray, Pope's "Lost Ovid," and that "fierce cornet of horse," or, as his master pleasantly called him, "trumpet of sedition," the elder Pitt—Mansfield and Chatham.

Lord Mansfield's letter, written in February, 1767, when he was nearly seventy years of age, is a specimen of clumsy penmanship, but of graceful, gentlemanly style. He had then been eleven years in the high judicial function which made his fame, and which he was destined to exercise for twenty more years—the longest judicial tenure, if my memory serves me, ever known—the light of serene intellect shining steadily to the last. He lived till he was on the edge of his ninth decade. Strangely, it occurs to me as I look on the blurred, yellow paper before me, do the generations of men bind themselves together. Lord Mansfield conversed with a man who had seen Charles I. beheaded, and the writer of these notes has in turn talked with those, or at least one, now an actual participant in this day's doings, who has associated with contemporaries of Mansfield and Chatham, and described their chronic bickerings.

On the 24th June, 1770, Lord Chatham, then at Hayes, wrote the words in his bold, masculine handwriting on which my eye now rests. It is addressed to Mr. Thomas Nuthall, the eminent solicitor, whose

death, soon after a conflict with a highwayman on Hounslow Heath, is recorded in the police story of those days. He was Lord Chatham's "Dear Nuthall." Beckford, ancestor of Fonthill and Vathek, who had dared to speak brave words of truth to royalty, was but three days dead. "I can say nothing," he writes, "upon the afflicting loss of Mr. Beckford—my heart is too full of it." Beckford, bold and turbulent, was a man after Chatham's own heart, and he mourned for him sincerely. No public man on the record of England's modern story has attracted more conflicting judgments; but still the statue, view it as we may, is very gigantic and imposing. The King hated him with all the ferocity of a diseased intellect. The gossips of politics, such as Horace Walpole, who have done so much to make history, were awed by him, and praised him involuntarily. Where, for instance, is there a finer tribute than when he writes to Mason, more than ten years after death had claimed Lord Chatham: "Admiral Darby has relieved Gibraltar, and the Spaniards ran into their burrows, *as if Lord Chatham were still alive.*" Yet Walpole was in the habit of calling him "old Garrick." Continental writers have done full justice. There is a letter somewhere from Turgot to Hume, of curious interest, as illustrative of the struggles of true political economy a century ago. It reads like Cobden: "Il serait, cependant, bien à désirer que M. Pitt, et tous ceux qui conduisent les nations pensassent comme nous sur tous les points. J'ai bien peur que votre fameux démagogue ne suive des principes tout différens, et ne se croie intéressé à entretenir dans votre nation le préjugé que vous avez appelé

‘jealousy of trade.’ Ce serait grand malheur pour les deux nations. Je crois cependant, l’épuisement assez égal de part et d’autre pour que cette folie ne fut pas longue!” It is a French writer of our day, as unlike Chatham “as I to Hercules,” who does him most exact justice. “He expanded,” says Lamartine, “the space of Parliament to the proportions of his own character and his own language. He was a public man in all the greatness of the phrase—the soul of a nation personified in an individual—the inspiration of a people in the heart of a patrician. His oratory had something as grand as his action. It was the heroic in language. The echoes of Lord Chatham’s words were heard, were felt, all over the continent.”

But my autographs prompt other and gentler thoughts than of Chatham as he fulminated over Europe—of him as a father and husband and friend—a friend, too, to *us*, for he refused to let his son draw a sword against American “rebels.” In 1769, as letters not yet published show, Lord Chatham retired with his family to Chevening, the seat of his son-in-law, in Kent, the owner being absent in Italy. There we read, in the letters of a domestic, very homely details. “The young gentlemen and ladies have had a dancing-master from town twice a week ever since they have been here. Lady Chatham has been so kind as to send for my wife and me to see their performance, which was exceedingly clever, and which we took as a great favour from her ladyship. Lord Pitt’s birthday was last Monday sennight, which was kept here, and a ball at night given to the servants. Lady Hester’s (‘afterward the weird hermit of Damascus’) is to-day, which

will be kept in the same manner, with a ball at night, so that we have of late lived wonderful merry, and everything has been quite agreeable. It was doubted some few days ago that Lord Chatham was going to have a fit of the gout, but it proved to be nothing but his overtiring himself with playing at billiards with the young gentlemen and ladies, which occasioned a little pain in his ankle." Nor does the Earl write less familiarly, though always with a Chathamie twang. He plans a new walk in the park,—to this day shown as "Lord Chatham's Drive,"—and thus refers to it: "I recommend the immediate execution of this essential work. If I can be of any use in conjunction with Mr. Brampton, I shall think myself honoured if you will appoint me joint overseer of the way, almost the only office an old cripple is fit for. I carry my ambition to be remembered at Chevening so far that I wish it may be said hereafter, if ever this plan for the road should go into execution, He, the overseer, who made this way, did not make the Peace of Paris." And then he adds, referring to his son, "My poor William is still ailing, but, thank God, is much better, so that we can leave him without anxiety next week."

There is in England a form of memorial which has never been to any extent introduced into this country—plaster casts of the countenances of the dead. They are very ghastly, but strangely impressive, and not life but death-like. Two are preserved at Chevening of this great father and great son. Lord Chatham's face is twisted by paralysis, showing unmistakeably the character of the blow which smote him on the field of his fame, on that April day ninety-three years ago;

while Mr. Pitt's fearful attenuation and expression of misery is as sad a sight as these eyes ever looked upon.

My autograph of the younger Pitt, illustrative of his happy and convivial tendencies, is brief enough to be quoted. The penmanship is very neat. The letter is addressed to the first Lord Carrington, then rejoicing in the simple patronymic of "Mr. Robert Smith:—"

"DEAR SMITH: Not having made the party I intended for to-day, I shall be glad if you will give me leave to recall my excuse, and to dine with you unless your table is full. Ever yours, W. PITT.

"Saturday morning."

The autographic roll I might call must not be too much prolonged; nor have I ventured on American subjects—Franklin's really beautiful penmanship, and Washington's fine, manly, surveyor's round-hand, with his profuse capitals and his obsolete but not incorrect spelling; and "Old Put's" autographical monstrosities. There is room for but one or two more illustrations from abroad. These lie before me—Cobbett's bold, clear, distinct writing, not a word too many, not a phrase uncertain, in the blackest of ink, and on the toughest of paper; and, by way of contrast, the daintiest little note of Samuel Rogers, as late as 1846, when he was among the "eighties," and yet as neatly written and expressed as if it were a young man's love-letter:

"I wish I could tell you what I felt when I read your very, very kind letter. Happy indeed should I be, if I could pass a day or two under your roof. But I dare not say yes—and yet you must not start if you

receive another saying that small and terrific monosyllable. Pray, pray forgive me, and remember me to one who requires no reminding—who, like yourself, never forgets a friend. Sincerely yours,

“October 14, 1846.

SAMUEL ROGERS.”

One other, and my illustrative gossip is done. In the following, the name of the bearer is alone suppressed, and the reader is begged to note the characteristic precaution of the Great Captain against midnight intrusion:

“LONDON, June 20, 1842.

“MRS. CROSS: I beg you to shew my house to —— and his friends on Wednesday, the 23d June, at twelve o'clock at noon. Yours, etc., WELLINGTON.”

Resolute to abstain in these illustrations from any reference to the living, some that are very precious have been laid aside, with the chance that he who pens these notes may be among the departed before the writers, whose words he cherishes, are called away. But as this little essay has been in progress, a knell from a distance tells me that, in one case, the reason for reserve has ceased. The great soldier of America,—for such history, when our miserable bickerings are forgotten, will pronounce him; the Christian gentleman; the knightly leader of chivalry, not less glorious because unfortunate; the man whom in his grave all, truly brave and good, mourn and honour,—Robert E. Lee, of Virginia, is dead; and, as these lines are written, is going to his grave, by the side of Jackson, at Lexington. His autographs lie before me; the penmanship

graceful and delicate, like a woman's, and his words those of modesty and simple truth.

As early as the 10th of November, 1865, he writes to a friend :

“I concur with you entirely as to the importance of a true history of the war; and it is my purpose, unless prevented, to write that of the campaigns in Virginia. With this view I have been engaged since the cessation of hostilities in endeavouring to procure the necessary official information. All my records, reports, returns, etc., with the headquarters of the army, were needlessly destroyed by the clerks having them in charge on the retreat from Petersburg, and such as had been forwarded to the War Department in Richmond were either destroyed in its conflagration or captured at the South in the attempt to save them. I desire to obtain some vouchers in support of my recollection, or I should have made some progress in the narrative. I have not even my letter or order books to which to refer. I have thought it possible that some of my official correspondence, which would be of value to me, might be found among the captured records in Washington, and that General Grant, who possesses magnanimity as well as ability, might cause me to be furnished with copies. I have, however, hesitated to approach him on the subject, as it is one in which he would naturally feel no interest.”

On the 28th December, 1866, he writes :

“If you see Mr. Davis, I beg that you will present to him my warmest regards; and, if you can find fit



words to express it, my deep interest in his welfare. You say rightly, that nothing can be done by his friends for his relief, and that adds to the bitterness of my distress; for I feel that any attempt only serves to arouse afresh the slumbering ire of his opponents. We must, therefore, be hopeful, but patient."

As late as the 11th of June, 1869, he says:

"I feel more strongly than I can describe the importance of a true history of the events of the war between the Northern and the Southern States, and had resolved to prepare a narrative of the military occurrences in Virginia. I have not changed my purpose, but at first thought the time was unpropitious. The passions of neither section had sufficiently cooled to hear the truth, the only thing I cared to relate. I do not think that time has arrived yet, but it is approaching. I have been collecting facts, but am at a loss in consequence of my records, papers, etc., having been destroyed, and have been so situated as to be incapable of supplying them. Still I am doing something and hope to succeed."

These were almost his last words; and they speak as a legacy to the South to do an unfulfilled duty, which a reconciled people will have a right to demand. As for him, though it may be that

"—— his triumphs will be sung  
By some unmoulded tongue,  
Far on in summers that we shall not see,"

the duty of surviving contemporaries is to prepare the record for the future. And who can better do this

work, illuminate this holy scroll, than the accomplished scholar and brave soldier who, I see, helped to bear the pall of Lee, and in whose veins flows the blood of the great general who fell at Shiloh?\*

With these saddened words I end my gossip about "Autographs."

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\* "During his last illness it was sometimes my sad duty to minister to his needs. I feel that in an assembly where every heart throbs with sorrow for our departed chieftain, I violate no confidence by adverting to a death-bed every way worthy of the life it ended. Once in the solemn watches of the night, when I handed him the prescribed nourishment, he turned upon me a look of friendly recognition, and then cast down his eyes with such a sadness in them that I can never forget it. But he spoke not a word; and this not because he was unable, for when he chose he did speak brief sentences with distinct enunciation, but because, before friends or family physicians feared the impending stroke, he saw the open portals of death, and chose to wrap himself in an unbroken silence as he went down to enter them. He, against whom no man could charge, in a long life, a word that should not have been spoken, chose to leave the deeds of that life to speak for him. To me, this woeful silence, this voiceless majesty, was the grandest feature of that grand death."—*William Preston Johnson's speech at Richmond, November 4, 1870.*

## WILLIAM COBBETT.

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THE transition from Chesterfield to Cobbett is a sharp one. It is going from the gilded drawing-room and the daintiest boudoir, where courtiers and fair women move gracefully, and are bewigged and bepowdered in all the cosmetic horrors of a century ago, to the humblest yeoman's cottage in the land, or eating bread and cheese under a hedge in the companionship of plain men and plainer women. To be honest—so artificial has this world of ours become—we rather like the drawing-room best; and, without disparagement of open air and fresh breezes and simple cottage or wayside food, prefer a dinner at Delmonico's. Dropping, however, these esculent illustrations, and not meaning to forswear literary allegiance to the distant past, let me annotate a strange book of practical and impracticable wisdom,—the only one of the author's I am familiar with, though old enough to remember Cobbett and with a dim memory of having seen him in the flesh,—his "Instructions" to "Young Men."

It is full—say the critics—of sound advice and "charming" personal and autobiographical recollections. Let us look at the last first. If to be truthful be charming, then are they so; but there is a rude homeliness in these revelations, an unconventionality

which scarcely reaches the level of fascination. I do not read the book with pleasure, though I do with interest. I do not love the man "Cobbett" any more than I do the man, of the earth, earthy,—Benjamin Franklin. Neither Peter Porcupine nor Poor Richard win me. One goes back to graceful, truly fascinating Philip Stanhope, pretty much as, after looking at the Cardiff giant, had it been real, or Mr. Lincoln in Union Square (who, in ugliness, is all reality), we crave a glimpse of the Tribune in Florence, or the Venus of the Louvre. Yet Cobbett proves himself always a robust and often a gentle man; and, amid his ostentatious coarseness, writes sweetly. Contrast, for example, his wretched, or, to use his own favourite adjective, "beastly" denunciation of vaccination—"cow-pox," as he calls it—with the perfectly lovely passage as to the love of children:

"Having," says he, "gotten over those thorny places as quickly as possible, I gladly come back to the *babies*, with regard to whom I shall have no prejudices, no affectation, no false pride, no sham fears to encounter; every heart (except there be one made of flint) being with me here. 'There were then brought to him *little children* that he should put his hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them.' But Jesus said, 'Suffer little children and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' And where is the man,—the woman who is not fond of babies is not worthy the name,—but where is the man who does not feel his heart softened, who does not feel himself become gentler, who does not lose all the hardness of his temper, when, in any way, for any purpose, or by any-

body, an appeal is made to him in behalf of these so helpless and so perfectly innocent little creatures?"

He hates music (no wonder he did not like Shakespeare)—a love of which he speaks of "as a mark of great weakness, great vacuity of mind;" but then, he says—for if the ear was dull, the eye was very bright and the fancy active:—"No man shall ever make me believe that those who reared the Cathedral of Ely (which I saw the other day) were rude either in their manners, or in their minds or words." He writes almost filthily about female ailments and necessities, but then he says—and what gallant courtier could do it more gracefully?—"With a young and inexperienced wife, you should bear in mind that the first frown she receives from you is a dagger in her heart."

But in vindicating the opinion that any one, ordinarily and humanly constituted, is not "charmed" by Cobbett, I am wandering from the glimpses of autobiography. His was a strange, and unless, as is quite possible, its fruits ripen by-and-by, an unprofitable life, and in nothing more strange than in his fragmentary connection, as it were, with this country. He was just old enough—born in 1762—to remember, as a lad, the American "Rebellion." I find no trace of his being impressed, as poor Haydon was, by the bitterness of animosity which inflamed even the popular English heart against the revolting colonies. It was terribly fierce; infected "loyal" women; and was, though in degree milder, not unlike the peculiar sentiment which took possession of female minds during our recent "troublesome times," and which still burns sullenly in certain regions. Haydon, in his diary—saddest of all

printed books—has this entry: “My grandfather (who was very fond of painting) married Mary Baskerville, a descendant of the printer. She was a woman of great energy and violent prejudices. She hated the French, and she hated the Americans; and once, when an American prisoner, who had escaped, crept into her house and appealed to her for protection until pursuit was over, though alone in the house, she told him she hated all Americans and rebels, and turned the poor fellow into the street.” This, I repeat, sounds like feminine “loyalty” nearer home, and of recent date. If Cobbett, as a young man, had not blood like this in his veins, and such bitterness in his heart, there is no sign of sympathy with those who struggled for freedom here. He came to America as a private soldier in 1786, and the soil on which he put his foot was the province of New Brunswick, most loyal of all dependencies originally, and made more so by the emigration of the refugees from the revolted colonies. Thither fled the Sewalls and others of New England, and Odell and the ribald Tories of the middle States, and thence, before they became slowly reconciled to the inevitable and irreversible, did they shoot sharp and poisoned arrows at their victorious brethren. With men of their position in society, the private soldier did not presume to associate, but, as he tells us, among plainer folks of the same political sect, he found a welcome. “I had got into the house of one of those Yankee loyalists who, at the close of the Revolutionary War (called a Rebellion till it succeeded) had accepted of grants of land in the King’s Province of New Brunswick; and who, to the great honour of England, had

been furnished with all the means of making new and comfortable homes." When, later in life, he came to Philadelphia, it is not difficult to measure his sympathy. The very first words of his "Porcupine," dated in 1794, are enough to start the buried Fathers of the Republic from their forgotten graves—to make Mr. Lossing and our historical societies gnash their teeth and tear their sparse hair, and delight to their inmost souls the tribe of to-day's slander-mongers. "The Congress," says he, "which began and conducted to its close that rebellion which severed thirteen flourishing and favoured colonies of America from the Kingdom of Great Britain, was a compound of men who, in point of craftiness, surpassed the Roundheads of England, and in point of enterprise and perseverance far outstripped the Jacobins of France. If ever history, freed from the shackles which they and their English abettors have imposed on her, should record their conduct in the language of truth, she will tell the selfish motives by which they were stimulated to seduce a loyal people from their allegiance to the most just and most merciful of kings; she will detect the fallacy of their pretensions; she will expose their close-veiled hypocrisy and ambition; and their measures of hostility and persecution she will write in letters of blood." This is pretty strong language; and dismal volumes are these "Porcupines." It was only in an abnormal state of society, such as existed in Philadelphia, and perhaps everywhere in the shadow of the new-born institutions from 1793 to 1800—the limit of Cobbett's residence—that such things would be tolerated and encouraged. When, a few years later, they came to be collected and republished by subscrip-

tion, any one familiar with the social condition here will see how completely respectable people of all sides shrank from the contact. They are vigorous, for he could not write feebly; they were occasionally eloquent, but they were ferocious. He seizes a political adversary, and, after he has stabbed him and felled him, he dances, in his savage way, around him, and hacks and hews him with a demoniac exultation to which there is no parallel, unless it be a China brave disemboweling and cutting off the breasts of a Sister of Charity at Tien-tsin. There is no exaggeration in this picture of his truculent rhetoric.

My eye lights, as I write, on a favourable specimen of his fierce eloquence on an impersonal theme, which, for reasons I need not give, has its interest now:

“A tender law is the *devil*. When I trust a man a sum of money, I expect he will return the value. That legislature which says my debtor may pay me with one-third of the value he received, commits a deliberate act of villainy—an act for which an individual in any government would be honoured with a whipping-post, and in some governments with a gallows. When a man makes dollars of which one-third part only is silver, he must lose his ears. But legislatures can, with the solemn faces of rulers and guardians of justice, boldly give currency to an adulterated coin, enjoin it upon debtors to cheat their creditors, and enforce their systematic knavery. My countrymen, the *devil* is among you. Make paper as much as you please. Make it a tender in all future contracts, or let it rest on its own credit—but remember that past contracts are sacred things.”



There was fierce honesty in what he did—as, for example, when a young Philadelphia doctor, who had received kindness at the hands of the Governor of Pennsylvania, sent Cobbett an anonymous letter, bitterly attacking his patron, and begging that it might be printed editorially, the indignant journalist printed the correspondence as it came to him, name and all; and the libeller never to the day of his death, long after, recovered from it. The venom which he poured upon Doctor Rush, to whom he dedicated a special journal, the “*Rush Light*,” was terribly acrid. One—albeit used to the charming amenities, just now, of the New York press—reads it with amazement. His error was in assailing professional rather than political character. He knew nothing of the anonymous letter to Patrick Henry, and Washington’s comment on it, or he would have used it with terrible effect, little as he loved either Henry or Washington. But Doctor Rush, mistaken as science has since shown his purgative-mercury and wholesale venesection to have been, was a great physician and an eloquent teacher. In the agonies of 1793 and 1798, when the immortal pestilence, for such it seems to be, for it has lately hovered near us, desolated Philadelphia, and was so frightful in its ravages that, like De Foe’s plague, it has been made the subject of romance, Doctor Rush remained at his post, and no soldier on the battle-field ever showed greater courage and steadiness than did he in his daily and nightly pilgrimages through the then unpaved streets and alleys of his native city. His patients, one and all, worshipped him, and the tradition of his genial manners in the

sick-room still makes people blind to the grievous and palpable defects of his moral nature. Hence was it that Cobbett's attack, directed at his enemy's strong point, failed and recoiled. It brought him, too, in conflict with the processes of the law, just then wielded by one whom Cobbett had vilified, and who was of that rugged nature which, having a substantial grievance, never forgets or forgives—not the Pharisaic unforgiveness of such men or women, as never do wrong and never forgive those who do, and who are so nice as to be nasty, but a robust vindictiveness which (not unlike Cobbett's, by the way) persecutes to the end. Such was the Chief-Justice of Pennsylvania—Thomas McKean—an honest, brave, violent, revengeful man. Him, as I have said, Cobbett had attacked with the full force of his coarse eloquence. He had upbraided him with judicial murder in the treason trials of 1778. He had twitted him with his notorious domestic infelicities, classic from the days of Socrates to Lord Cowper's; he had, in short, exasperated an inflammable nature to the explosive point, when he became a defendant-litigant before him, being indicted for libel, and, if ever there was such a thing as a libel, being singularly guilty. The story of that litigation is inappropriate here, the end being that Cobbett became outlaw and exile from his adopted home. He never forgave Philadelphia, and even in the little book which was meant to be the text of these notes, printed in 1830, I detect a fling at Philadelphia society at which one cannot refrain from smiling. "It used to be remarked," says he, "in Philadelphia when I lived there, that there was not a

single man of any eminence, whether doctor, lawyer, merchant, trader, or anything else, that had not been born and bred in the country and of parents in a low state of life."

The prejudice against an English radical never has quite died out in this country of ours, and for it, Cobbett is largely responsible; and when, in our day, on foreign radicalism was engrafted the poisonous shoot of abolitionism, the growth, in the eye of good taste at least, is strangely unpleasant. Very different has been, as we all know, the fate of our Celtic radicals, and nowhere, in one instance, more so than in the city which Cobbett afflicted. An Irish exile came to Philadelphia, with a temper as impetuous and a pen as active, who hated the English government quite as cordially; and wrote books and pamphlets without number to express that hatred—a "Papist" too. He came about the time Cobbett did, but, unlike Cobbett, assimilated at once with those around him, was an active and useful citizen, made no lasting enemies by his controversies and many friends by his kindnesses (among whom the writer, then a boy, gratefully records himself), and left behind a name that is honoured, and descendants who, in spite of economical hobbies and heresies, are esteemed and beloved for their personal virtues. I speak of Matthew Carey. In his day an Irishman was not the Pariah which Radical and Protestant fanaticism is now seeking to make him.

Cobbett returned once more to this country,—an old man, and, according to his own showing, on a wretched errand,—to dig up Tom Paine's bones at New Rochelle and carry them as sacred relics to England.

It was indecent, ineffectual mockery. As was said long ago, "the bones of the scoffer were looked on by such of the British people as knew anything about them, with no more regard or sentiment than the anatomical student bestows on the unknown subject before him." The pageant was ungraceful, and taking into view the living as well as the dead, it was ludicrous.

Such were Cobbett's odd relations to this country, and such the life which, to a certain though limited extent, this little book illustrates. It was, I fear, in the general result unprofitable.

Let me open the book again, now that we know the author. While Cobbett, as we have shown (though instances might be largely multiplied), was a gentle, loving man, he was a model hater. To an individual and private man who had wronged him, he could, no doubt, be tolerant, but to such public men as had used political power to oppress and ruin him, he cherished a resentment which, such is the infirmity of our nature, and such the clear distinction between public and private wrongs, cannot be entirely condemned. Does any one imagine or pretend, that the refined and honourable gentlemen who, on the night of the 13th of September, 1861, were dragged from their beds in Baltimore, and immured without an accuser for fourteen months in Fort Warren, will or ought to forgive the men who did it or who connived at it? It would be a condonation worse than that of adultery. And who is there to blame Cobbett, who, when immured for a political offense in prison, where for two years he lingered, says, in speaking of the danger to his wife's life from their separation: "If such was not the effect of this

merciless act of the government toward me, that amiable body may be well assured that *I have taken and recorded the will for the deed*, and that as such it will live in my memory as long as that memory shall last." The italics are Cobbett's, and it recalls a just and genial criticism on this "addiction," as it were, of his. Usually those who know how to use the English language eschew this mode of emphasis. Cobbett, as any one will see who opens this one volume, revels in it. Archdeacon Hare, somewhere in his "Guesses of Truth," says: "Cobbett is profuse of italics. This instance may be supposed to refute the assertion that the writers who use them are not versed in the art of composition. But though Cobbett was a wonderful master of plain speech, all his writings betray his want of logical and literary culture. He had never sacrificed to the Graces, who cannot be won without many sacrifices. He cared only for strength; and, as his own bodily frame was of the Herculean rather than the Apollinian cast, he thought that a man could not be very strong unless he displayed his thews. Besides, a Damascus blade would not have gashed his enemies enough for his taste; he liked to have a few notches on his sword." From a man who says that he does not like (and he italicizes it) "a slow, soft utterance in woman," may be expected the coarse shriek of exultation over a fallen victim. The "notched sword" makes fearful gashes, as when, speaking of Napoleon, whom he detested, he says: "Had he not divorced Josephine, or, having done so, married the prettiest and poorest girl in France, he would, in all probability, have now been on an imperial throne, instead of being eaten by

worms at the bottom of a very deep hole in Saint Helena." The reference to Sir Samuel Romilly's broken-hearted suicide is awful, but very impressive.

"He never sacrificed to the Graces." Nay, not only so, but he showed a strong disposition to butcher all who did. His literature, from certain indications—unconscious croppings out—was greater than he claims credit for. He had the affectation of seeking to conceal, not that he had read much, but his specific obligations to books, and above all to deny that he ever had "models," or that he was influenced by the common judgment about books. Hence, he sneered at Shakespeare, and, most illogically, narrates at length Ireland's experiment of forgery as evidence of Shakespeare's evil influence. Addison he treats as beneath contempt, "feeble and ungrammatical;" and gives a grotesque account of being awakened from a dream of enthusiasm by reading Dennis's "Criticism on Cato" in a tavern in the backwoods of America, and "bursting out laughing at the result." Not having read "Dennis," which is inaccessible here, I cannot measure the force of the criticism, but a hundred and sixty years have passed since Dennis lived and wrote, and the last Spectator appeared, and Cato was played; and, as I say, I cannot find "Dennis"—and Sir Roger de Coverley and Will Honeycomb, and the criticisms on Milton live, and I like (perhaps because it is shorter) the "Vision of Mirza" infinitely better than the "Pilgrim's Progress." As to "Cato," I concede its dullness, but as a Whig play it was a success, and, at intervals, it holds its place on the stage down to our times. There is dramatic effect in the scene where Cato meets

the dead body of his son, and something very like poetry in Syphax's description of the Zamian beauties:

“The sun which rolls his chariot o'er their heads,  
Has flushed their cheeks with more exalted charms.  
When once with these, my prince, you'll soon forget  
The pale, unripened beauties of the north!”

It always has seemed to me that “the sullen shot” of the distant French in Wolfe's elegy, and Addison's (or Andrew Marvel's) “nightly to the listening earth,” were bright gems of poesy. Those—and there are some, doubtless—who prefer gazing on the citadel of Gibraltar, with its huge masonry, or the Pyramids, to the Taj at Agra, cold, white, useless perhaps, but beautiful, rising from the hovels around—may prefer Cobbett to Addison, but I have yet a weakness for the prim, scholarly, vinous Christian gentleman, who knew how to die, leaving behind him rich legacies, Cobbett and Dennis to the contrary notwithstanding. “It is not,” says Landor, “so much his style as the sweet temperature of thought in which we always find him, and the attractive countenance, if you will allow me the expression, with which he meets one on every occasion.”

But will a boy of to-day, with its refinements and conventionalities, be the better for reading a book like this? One thing he certainly will not learn from it—diffidence of himself—the modesty which wins in youth, and, once part of our being, wears so well in age. Cobbett has as little sense of it as he has of music. He speaks of his own “History of the Reformation” as, “unquestionably, the book of the greatest circulation in

the whole world, the Bible only excepted," and of his "famous French grammar, which has been for thirty years, and still is, the great work of the kind throughout all America, and in every nation in Europe." Then, too, the ingenuous youth of to-day will find himself confronted with a set of infirmities, or even virtues turned into vices and crimes, enough to make him despair. Cobbett was in one respect of a Puritan nature, but, like Puritan men and women now-a-days, had a set of pet crimes. Torture in a Connecticut prison, or stoning a school teacher to death in Massachusetts, is no worse than—nay, not so bad as—inheriting or owning a slave, or drinking a glass of wine. So with Cobbett. The fiercest passages of this little book are directed not only at the theatre, as to which there may be an intelligible difference of opinion, but at music, (not for a wonder, dancing); "chess," which he classes with gambling; "a looking-glass" to shave or dress by; and tea and coffee, which he considers quite as bad as "grog." All is proscribed, and with equal vehemence. As his friend Paine irreverently said of the creation, "If the Almighty had been a Quaker, this would have been a drab-colored world without a green leaf or a glimpse of blue sky," so, if Cobbett had the absolute mastery of social and domestic economy, this would be a hard world to live in. Hence, in my poor judgment, this is an unprofitable book for the youth of to-day.

The strange, hardy, perverse man wrote conscientiously, and under a high sense of responsibility. If there be no line which, dying, he would wish to blot, he thought soberly and seriously before he wrote.



## BLACKSTONE'S COMMENTARIES.

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As of theology and the Prayer Book, so of Blackstone and the law, I exorcise law, and think and write of the "Commentaries" only as literature ; and exceedingly pleasant literature they are. The poet Gray, in one of his letters, if my memory serves me, to Mason, says if "Coke-Littleton" could be printed by Elzevir or Aldi, on nice satin paper with gilt edges, and bound by the Thouvinet of his day, many a one would read it who now shrinks from folios and heavy columns. This is rather an extreme statement of the case, for they who have been made to pore over the awful "Institutes" with a suspicion, which has never faded away, that it was labour lost, cannot imagine it was, or by any conceivable masquerade could be made, attractive. Not so Blackstone. A dress-coat and a white cravat become him ; he is gentlemanly and agreeable all over ; and my copy is, or was, bound to look as little like a law-book as possible, and had its place among the British classics ; and untechnical students, and even women, not "strong-minded," but highly cultivated, intelligent, knowledge-seeking, graceful women, have read it and enjoyed it, which they certainly would not, had it been in "under-done, piecrust binding," with a red label and star paging. Hence, too, is it, that in this respect one craves an

edition without notes, or with none but such as the author made. All others—and the more profuse the annotation the worse the edition—are, as a matter of art, only better than the grotesque experiment made years ago by an American judge, of writing what he called a “*Pennsylvania Blackstone*,” modifying and curtailing the sacred text to that end, and producing a book from which good taste shrinks in horror. The annotated editions, beginning with Christian’s (I believe the first) and ending with our American Sharswood’s, which by common consent is the best, are doubtless very good as tools of trade—the cobbler’s awl and last, and the blacksmith’s anvil—but they are too cumbrous and technical for the idle use of the gentlemanly scholar. The best edition for amateur uses is Sir John Coleridge’s, published in 1825, and described as the sixteenth.\* The notes are those of a refined, scholarly man, rather than a technical lawyer, and are characteristic of the highly-bred and educated Christian gentleman, whose serene old age now shines gently, like a setting luminary, from his Devonshire seclusion, and, whether editing a law-book, or illustrating a lovely life like Keble’s, irradiates pleasantly. I have a memory, in student days, of another and American edition of the Commentaries, which has become obsolete, which came near my ideal, by Henry St. George Tucker, of Virginia, with full expositions of the Constitution (when we had one), and a discussion (how my young brain worried over

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\* There is in the N. Y. Hist. Library the imperfect copy of an edition of *Blackstone* printed in America as early as 1771.

it) of the rule as to "*mala prohibita* and *mala in se*." And certainly Sir William's heresy on this head needs annotation. It, of course, has an earnest protest from an editor so pure, so direct, so conservative as Coleridge. The Blackstone theory, plainly stated, is neither more nor less than this, that in the matter of obedience or disobedience to laws creating what may be termed artificial offenses, such as smuggling or poaching, or, as with us in olden times, harbouring "a fugitive from labour," conscience is no further concerned than in submission to the penalty, whatever it may be. Surely, neither Paley nor his disciples, nor Dr. Wayland, nor any utilitarian, ever went so far. It is a solemn paraphrase of Fag's *dictum*, "I don't mind lying, sir, but it hurts my conscience to be found out." 'Violate the law,' says Blackstone, 'and the pang of conscience on detection will be assuaged by paying the penalty.' There can be no such rule in pure or exalted ethics. We have in our day known,—thanks to those prolific parents of all manner of lies, "tariffs,"—more or less mild smuggling successfully accomplished,—silk dresses, and laces, and cigars,—but would not a parent have at least a latent blush to see a daughter dressed in smuggled raiment, and does any sensitive man care to think of his own success in violating a law the principle of which he disapproves? There can be but one safe rule: that conscience binds to obedience to all law because it is law. This rigid assertion of what some may think impracticable morality and its unworthy antagonism have had, in our times and at our homes, strange illustrations. Without going back to the fugitive slave legislation, con-

stitutional or statutory, when a deeper question of conscientiousness was supposed to be involved, and the "irrepressible conflict" doctrine was enunciated by those who had very little conscience as to anything else, one is confronted with a curious historical illustration of the Blackstonian dogma thoroughly carried out. When the Peace Congress (that body which but for prevalent madness might have saved the ineradicable blood-stains of four years of civil war) met at Washington, in February, 1861, a formal proposition was made—by no less a person than the present Chief-Justice, whose good nature, when the crisis came which he and his followers had provoked, shrank from blood-shedding—that the North should continue to harbour fugitive slaves and pay the value of them as a penalty: 'We cannot, in conscience, obey the law, but will pay cheerfully the penalty of violating it.' And this 'compounding' of crime was to be made part of the Constitution which honest and religious people were to swear to support! It failed at once, for the honour of the South rejected it. One other case, by way of contrast, occurs to my mind, bent, perhaps morbidly, on these memories, illustrative of the true and the high rule. How many Northern men and women were there, during our "troublous times," who honestly, perhaps mistakenly, but still most conscientiously, thought the war on the South was wicked and wrong in its inception and in its conduct? Still, for the North 'war' was the law, and, so far as my observation went, no one of reputable position, however pronounced his opinions, ever violated or thought of violating the law, or doing anything in derogation of it. They felt the

ethical rule to be,—not Blackstone's,—that conscience bound them to obey the law as such.

But I am wandering from my theme, though the theme suggests all I have written. The question is often asked, almost sneeringly, by carping critics like Priestley and Jeremy Bentham,—reverentially by the thousands of grateful men who owe to Blackstone their easy and pleasant initiation to the study of the science by which they earn their daily bread—the question is asked, why is it that so old-fashioned a book as “*The Commentaries*” should last so long, and be, for the uses of to-day, so beautifully fresh? There is no difficulty in answering it, after a thought or two on this wonderful vitality. It is exactly a hundred and twelve years ago, 25th October, 1758, since Blackstone, a young man of thirty-five, uttered the words: “*Mr. Vice-Chancellor and Gentlemen of the University,*” with which is heralded the beautiful essay-oration on the “*Study of the Law;*” and now, in 1870, these words speak sweetly and encouragingly—in spite of revolt and revolution, of Parliamentary reform (a terrible bugbear) and Catholic emancipation and Irish disestablishment (to say naught of minor social and political disturbances here and everywhere)—to every youth who, as a student, crosses the threshold of a lawyer's office in England, or America, or Australia, or wherever English law is taught. It has conquered prejudice, political and sectarian. Nothing has superseded it. Nothing, we have a right to assume, ever will. Harsh critics and adversaries—and they have been legion—have faded out of memory. Junius hurled some of his most mischievous missiles, rather,

however, at the judge than the commentator, and we regard them with the same sort of interest as one would look at an exploded shell at the foot of the Strasbourg minster. Of the thousands who read Blackstone with delight and trust, how small a fraction care a straw for Jeremy Bentham—that transitory idol of poor philosophy!\* Doctor Priestley wrote essays which, for a time and within certain circles, were popular, and he is as much forgotten and neglected as is the decaying Pennsylvania village where the exile found a home and a grave. Yet Blackstone lives and will live; and that, we doubt not, which has embalmed him—not as were the mummies of Egypt or the hideous martyrs of our late war when, as with everything, the antiseptic process was made matter of jobbing, but as perfectly life-like and natural, around whom there is transparent crystal—is his matchless style, his inimitably graceful English (albeit, strangely parenthetical), his “enchanting harmony,” which Bentham grudgingly admits and deplores. Open the book anywhere and you see the beauty of the style and hear the music of the periods! How sweetly sound the closing words of his introductory essay:

“To the few, therefore (the very few I am persuaded), that entertain such unworthy notions of an university as to suppose it intended for mere dissipation of thought; to such as mean only to while away the awkward interval from childhood to twenty-one, between the restraints of the school and the licentious-

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\* A valued, scholarly friend here makes protest, but Blackstone is read and Jeremy is *not*!

ness of politer life, in a calm middle state of mental and of moral inactivity; to these, Mr. Viner gives no invitation to an entertainment which they never can relish; but to the long and illustrious train of noble and ingenuous youth, who are not more distinguished among us by their birth and possessions than by the regularity of their conduct and their thirst after useful knowledge; to these our benefactor has consecrated the fruits of a long and laborious life, worn out in the duties of his calling, and will joyfully reflect (if such reflections can be now the employment of his thoughts) that he could not more effectually have benefitted posterity, or contributed to the service of the public, than by founding an institution which may instruct the rising generation in the wisdom of our civil polity, and inform them with a desire to be still better acquainted with the laws and constitution of their country."

The critical reader of to-day may pause on the use here of the word "inform," but it is Miltonic. All else is graceful and modern, as if written yesterday.

Nor can any one measure the charm of the mode of instruction, originating with Viner and consummated by Blackstone, so accurately as the historical student who knows what were the actual processes of professional education before, when the student was "expected to seclude himself from the world, and, by a tedious, lonely process, to extract the theory of law from a mass of undigested learning." There lie before me, as I write, the manuscript note and commonplace books of one of these unfortunates—an American Templar of the ante-Blackstone period—one of the scholar lawyers who, from the middle and southern

colonies, went abroad to be accomplished for the great struggle of "law" which soon was to occur at home. It must have been weary work. Woodeson had, I believe, been published, but it is a dismal book. Gilbert was the main reliance; and Buller's *Nisi Prius*, and Coke, and Croke, and the Year Books; and though, I doubt not, the "illiterate" lawyer will say it was this very hard work, this digging painfully round the foundations of the law, which made them what they were, yet, for all that, the Vinerian commentaries must have been very welcome. They took their appropriate place and they reign forever.

Blackstone, we learn, was something of a poet; but I confess, if the "Farewell to the Muse" be the type of what we might have had, I incline to the faith that

"—— nothing in his life  
Became him like the leaving *her*."

But still it may be that the subtle, fanciful element which we call "poetic," mingling with other faculties of art-nature which he is known to have possessed, influenced his oral and his written style, and gave it its grace and melody. His predominant taste when a young man, we are told, was for architecture, in which, practically, he was no mean adept; and when one contemplates this intellectual structure of his—these "Commentaries"—complete as a scientific and beautiful system, from the frieze to the foundation, there is more than a sentimental impression that his love for the master-art shone through his work. To his great book are strictly applicable the very words which, at its close, he applies to the British constitution. It



sounds like Giotto at the foot of the Campanile, or Michael Angelo, if it had been vouchsafed to him, before perfected St. Peter's:

“Of what has been so wisely contrived, so strongly raised, and so highly finished, it is hard to speak with that praise which is justly and severely its due—the thorough and attentive contemplation of it will furnish its best panegyric. It hath been my endeavour to examine its solid foundations, to mark out the extensive plan, to explain the use and distribution of its parts, and from their harmonious concurrence to demonstrate the elegant proportions of the whole. We have taken occasion to admire at every turn the noble monuments of ancient simplicity and the more curious refinements of modern art. Nor have its faults been concealed from view, for faults it has, lest we should be tempted to think it more than human structure, defects chiefly arising from the decays of time or the rage of unskillful improvements in later ages. To sustain, to repair this noble pile, is a charge intrusted chiefly to the nobility and such of the gentlemen of the kingdom as are delegated by their country to Parliament. The protection of the liberty of Britain is a duty which they owe to themselves who enjoy it; to their ancestors, who transmitted it down; and to their posterity, who will claim at their hands this, the best birthright and noblest inheritance of mankind.”

And is it not—for in the region of letters in which I am trying to move I am out of reach of the slang of politics and dare ask the question—is it not a great social inheritance, this mythical or actual thing called the British constitution, and do we not know that the

great buttress which maintains it, is what writers such as Blackstone helped to build,—an unspotted, unsuspected, dispassionate judiciary,—thoroughbred, ripened lawyers?

One other word, and I have done. It is perfectly marvellous how, in these four volumes of elementary law, comprising at most some 1800 pages, less than the product of one session of a State Legislature, so much variety of practical learning has been compressed. There is hardly a judicial question of contemporary occurrence on which some light is not thrown, or some reference given to a source from which knowledge may be gained. Hence is it, for this universal applicability, that these Commentaries, even for practical purposes, are always useful. It has been his lot who writes these rambling notes, in which some venial egotism may be tolerated, to read with pleasure and gratitude, Blackstone at distant periods of life, and with widely different associations. As a lad fresh from college, feeling with distrust the weight of the armour he was doomed to wear for the struggle of life; as a young man in a distant land, under the guidance of an eminent lawyer, who solaced a sort of diplomatic exile by revising the studies of his youth, and loved 'Blackstone' dearly (I recollect reading the 'canons of descent' in sight of the snowy peaks of Mexico, wrapped in my great coat and warming my feet in the vertical sun); again, when myself in turn an old man, in regions more remote, guiding the studies of those who were dear to me; and now, within the last few months or weeks, when the race of life is run and lost, and the work done. Always with pleasure, always with profit, always with gratitude!

## SERMONS—BARROW TO MANNING.

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THERE is a great deal of rubbish in what are called ‘statistics.’ They are often deceptive when profitably applied, and are, nine times in ten, useless aggregations of detail; some, of course, more than others. The French diplomat and savant (for he was both) who, on a voyage from Brest to China in a screw frigate, counted the revolutions of the propeller and reported them to his government, typified one class. Dean Ramsay, author of a pleasant little book called “Pulpit Table-talk,” is the representative of another. He has an elaborate computation, from which he evolves the important and frightful result, that on a single Sunday, in the United Kingdom, there are seventy-five thousand sermons preached. Add to this an equal number for the United States and the colonies (and this is far below the mark), and we reach the astounding sum, in round numbers, of nine millions of sermons (in *avoirdupois* some tons), written and preached in the English language in one year. We will not venture on any averages of pulpit vitality, or deductions for repetitions, but pause in awe of this marvellous result for one short span of time. If there be anything in Sir Charles Babbage’s theory, which old Dan Chaucer prefigured, of the air undulations which make the utterances of

the human voice immortal, these computations become overwhelming. If the clangour of the strife at Marathon, or the words of Demosthenes and Æschines, be yet sounding somewhere in illimitable space, enormous surges of clerical twaddle, masses of pulpit platitude, are rolling onward too. *Labitur et labetur*, etc. One is hardly able to measure the value or the worthlessness of it all. In the restlessness or the somnolence with which a dull discourse is listened to, we are apt unduly to disparage the vast influence which this mode of intellectual action exercises. Watch the crowds which fill the streets of a great city at Sunday noon, and remember that, to each individual man and woman of that concourse (and women listen more deferentially than men) solemn words, or words in solemn guise, have just been spoken, with more or less impressiveness, and that some at least have made their mark. In this view, we can afford to excuse a great deal of nonsense and stupidity. In dissenting denominations, the sermon is the great feature of devotion. In fact, their prayers have a hortatory, exegetical character, which makes worship one long sermon with (not to speak it profanely) music between the acts. In the Anglican and Roman Catholic communions, not only is there a limit of time, rendered necessary by the length of the supplicatory services, but liturgical discipline pares preaching closely, and puts sermonizing, where it ought to be, in the background. Now and then, some ambitious youth of oratorical pretensions and large feminine popularity is restive under this restraint, and hurries or curtails the service in order to have more room for display;

but, as a general thing, the clergy acquiesce. Is it on this account, or are there deeper reasons, that the pulpit eloquence of these churches, with signal exceptions among dissenters, both here and abroad, is most distinguished? Chalmers and Robert Hall, and, in their way, Irving and Whitfield and Melville, are all exceptions to any general theorizing. The eloquence of the Anglican church, at the moment these words are written, never was more distinguished, at least for genial and gentlemanly scholarship.

Sermons and sermon-writing open a wide field for criticism. Nothing is contemplated here but to trace through personal experience the line of thought, which, having its source in indiscriminate admiration of the pulpit, has narrowed down to very fastidious criticism. Remember, reader, he is a layman, and, as to individuals, a rather irreverent layman, whose notes these are.

Happy is his youth who, decorously compelled to go to church,—for the tendency of the normal boy is not in that direction,—has the good luck to go but to one. Mine was a different fate, and early digestion was spoiled, perhaps permanently ruined, by a variety of clerical viands. There was no tabernacle of wood, or brick, or stone, that was not visited; no hebdomadal spouter, from the priest and bishop of high ecclesiasticism down to the Universalist, who sold bobbins all the week and preached latitudinarianism on Sunday, whom I did not hear; and now that memory travels back over a vast distance to the tangled, weedy field, how few things worth remembering survive! Here, too, my boyish memory fastens on eminent men chiefly in the two denominations for which, in no offence, pre-

eminence is claimed. I recall, as of yesterday, the manly, vigorous utterances of Bishop Hobart, the gentle eloquence of Dehon, and the wonderful music of Bishop Meade's voice—the last utterances of which were in prayer for invaded, desecrated Virginia,—and in the Church of Rome, Bishop England, and, in his prime, John Hughes; never more eloquent, and, one may affirm, never so happy or so useful as when a parish priest in Pennsylvania, and before, either of his own motion or at Mr. Seward's bidding, he played the politician in New York. There was a captivating orator of those days, in the Celtic element at least, William Vincent Harrold. All dead, all gone, but none forgotten! But that it is violating a rule which, in these notes, I have tried to observe, one might note here—not as of boyish but fresh manly memory—a living pulpit orator, yet spared to us, John P. Durbin, then, if I mistake not, of Kentucky. All these are vague, traditional thoughts, hardly worth giving form to.

Not so the study of written sermons. They have been a substantial branch of study and exercised a large influence on taste; for, according to my best judgment, some of the sources of purest and most vigorous English style are very near the pulpit. It is the memory of a great many years back, in a busy lawyer's office, that side by side with Plowden and Coke, were two other folios with the thick paper, red edge, black type, and heavy binding, of more than a century ago. These were Barrow's sermons, which Lord Chatham advised his son William to read as models of sonorous eloquence, and which Byron tells us he devoured weekly.

“Much English I cannot pretend to speak,  
Learning that language chiefly from the preachers,  
Barrow, South, Tillotson, whom every week  
I study, also Blair, the highest reachers  
Of eloquence in piety and prose.”

Of Blair, I doubt, and Tillotson I never read, but to the others I bow down reverentially as my masters. They are far away from me, those dear old folios; they have passed out of sight, just as their owner and nearly all the joyous young men whose careers were then beginning, have passed out of life.

It is a strange coincidence, such ‘eloquence of piety’ as Barrow’s—for ‘South’ is in another category—with the dissolute irreligion of the Restoration; Barrow preaching, with earnestness and emphasis, morality of the sternest school, with the orgies of Whitehall within ear-shot.\* Yet so it was, and he practiced what he taught. His was a brief but chequered career, over all the variations and chances of which, his steady temper and sure intellectual training seemed to throw a graceful garment of consistency. He was a Charter-House boy and a Trinity College man, and hence his mathematical proficiency; for, says his biographer, in simple, homely phrase, “dissatisfied with the shallow and superficial philosophy which was taught, he applied himself to the study of the Lord Verulam, Monsieur Descartes, Galileo, and other great wits of the last age, who seemed to offer something more solid and substantial.” Why he should speak of them as of “the past,” is not clear, since

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\* “The impudent stare of a Castlemaine confronts a Barrow.”—*Willmott’s Pleasures of Literature*, p. 123.

Galileo was, in old age, Barrow's contemporary, dying in 1642, and Descartes in 1650, and the most remote, Bacon, in 1626. He weathered the fiercest blasts of triumphant Puritanism, and in 1654, the year after Cromwell dispersed his second Parliament, and the new crisis was at hand the issue of which no one could foretell, Barrow, then twenty-four years of age, went abroad, selling his library to pay expenses, and rambled over the continent, going as far south as Siena and Florence, and east as Smyrna and Constantinople, and here, we are told, he studied anew, on the very spot where the golden-mouth Saint had boldly preached "judgment to come" in the presence of Eudoxia, the voluminous works of Chrysostom. It is not my design to write biography, yet I have drifted into it unconsciously, from the interest I feel in the theme, and close it by the recollection that the great preacher was also a great mathematician, and the immediate predecessor of 'Mr. Isaac Newton' in the chair of Geometry at Cambridge. He died in 1675. He scarcely preached at all till he resigned his professorship, and in his compacted and exhaustive logic it is not difficult to trace his early and his adult training. His discourses must have been formidable in length at the end of the usual morning service of the Church of England, measuring, so far as I can approximate it, one hour to an hour and a half in length.

South was nearly contemporary with Barrow, the latter dying in 1675, when forty-seven years of age, while the former lived beyond eighty, and died in 1716. They were widely different. A great wrong was done to Robert South in calling him 'the witty



Dr. South,' for it conveys the mistaken idea that wit was his most marked characteristic. Witty he certainly was, exuberantly so. It was rough, ribald wit, too. He seizes hold of a Puritan pretender and literally tears him to pieces. He sometimes dispatches him with a single phrase or sentence, as 'those seraphic pretenders,' this 'apocalyptic ignoramus;' "for," says he in his sermon at Whitehall—and one may fancy how Charles II. enjoyed it—"the proceedings of '41 and some of the following years may well pass for the Devil's works in a second edition, or a foul and odious copy much exceeding the original. I profess not myself skilled or delighted in mystical interpretations of Scripture; nor am I for forcing or even drawing the sense of the text so as to make it designedly foretell the King's death and murder; nor to make England, Scotland, and Ireland (as some enthusiasts have done) the adequate scene for the prophetic spirit to declare future events upon; as if, forsooth, there could not be so much as a few houses fired, a few ships taken, or any other calamitous accident befall this little corner of the world, but that some apocalyptic ignoramus must presently find and pick it out of some abused or martyred prophecy of Ezekiel or the Revelations;" or, as in another instance, too long to be quoted here, his marvellous description of a Puritan sermon, where he fairly revels in a full flood of bright sarcasm. But withal there is on every page something higher and better than wit or satire—noble, dignified eloquence,—and this in strange collocation with illustrations almost grotesque, as where in one sentence, or rather on one page, he says: "As snakes breed

in dunghills, not singly but in knots, so in such base, noisome hearts you shall ever see pride and ingratitude indivisibly wreathed and twisted together." On the next we have: "Ingratitude is too base to return a kindness and too proud to regard it, much like the tops of mountains, barren indeed, but yet lofty; they produce nothing, they feed nobody, they clothe nobody, yet are high and stately, and look down upon all the world about them." So again, "There is a time to pardon and a time to punish, and the time of one is not the time of the other. When corn has once felt the sickle it has no more benefit from the sunshine;" or when he speaks of the politician "as treating gratitude as a worse kind of witchcraft, which only serves to conjure up the pale, meagre ghosts of dead, forgotten kindnesses to haunt and trouble him;" or, in a nobler passage, full of high poetry, descriptive of our Saviour being seized by the Jews: "They sent out an inconsiderable company with swords and staves to apprehend Him; but what could this pitiful body of men have done to prejudice His life, who, with much more ease than Peter drew his sword, could have summoned more angels to His assistance than there were legions of men marching under the Roman banners."

Quotations may be multiplied to any extent, but my limits warn me to forbear. There are some odd things to be noted on these pulpit pages, as for example:

Every student of our early history is familiar with the constant use made, at the beginning of the American Revolution, of the precedents of the commonwealth of 1641. Washington, who was a decorous churchman

and a cavalier, did not relish them ; but Mr. Jefferson, whose religion went not much beyond convenient rhetoric, had no such scruples, and records with great glee what, on the enactment of the Boston Port Bill, the Virginia ‘rebels’ did in this respect. “With the help of Rushworth,” says he, “whom we rummaged out for the revolutionary precedents and forms of the Puritans of those days, we cooked up a resolution, somewhat modernizing the phrases, for appointing the 1st of June, on which the port bill was to commence, for a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer, to implore Heaven to avert from us the evils of civil war, and to inspire us with firmness in support of our rights, and to turn the hearts of the king and Parliament to moderation and justice.” South seems to have foreseen the use to be made of these pious precedents, for says he, in his ‘Discourse on Extemporary Praying,’ of which he has a liturgical horror: “Such sort of prayer has always been found an excellent way of girding at the government in Scripture phrase. And we all know the common dialect in which the great masters of this art used to pray for the king, and which may justly pass for only a daintier and more refined mode of libelling him in the Lord. As, ‘that God would turn his heart to justice and moderation and open his eyes;’ as if he were a pagan yet to be converted to Christianity; with many other sly, virulent, and malicious insinuations which we may every day hear of from those mints of treason and rebellion, the conventicles.”

With one other citation, I close this desultory criticism on the ancient pulpit. That strong, robust

man, William Cobbett, who, as we have seen, had a gentle spirit, somewhere says: "A man, as he writes on a sheet of paper a word or sentence, ought to bear in mind that he is writing something which may, for good or evil, live forever." This is a momentous thought, and South says: "He who has published an ill book must know that his guilt and his life determine not together; no, such an one, as the Apostle says, 'Being dead, yet speaketh;' he sins in his very grave, corrupts others while he is rotting himself, and has a growing account in the other world after he has paid nature's last debt in this; and, in a word, quits this life like a man carried off by the plague, who, though he dies himself, does execution upon others by a surviving infliction." There is a terrible truth in this. Who that has ever used an unlucky though clever phrase—who that has consciously or unconsciously given pain or excited resentment by a sharp sarcasm—and who of us has not—will fail to estimate one other quotation? It is from the sermon on "The Fatal Imposture and Force of Words:" "There is a certain bewitchery or fascination in words which makes them operate with a force beyond which we can naturally give an account of. For would not a man think ill deeds and shrewd truths should reach further and stick deeper than ill words? And yet, not so. Men much more easily pardon ill things done than ill things said against them, such a peculiar rancour and venom do words leave behind them in men's minds, and so much more poisonously and venomously does the serpent bite with his tongue than with his teeth."

Travelling down the course of time, one pauses before two clerics, separated by three-quarters of a century, and still more divided as it were by fate; one, restless, intriguing, and unfortunate, Atterbury; the other, arrogant and successful Horsely; and both devout Christian men. Their style is as different as were the men, but the difference hardly admits of definition. It has always seemed to me that Atterbury, acute, gentlemanly, worldly, but at heart good, was a sort of Archdeacon Grantley of the times of the Stuarts. There is something more than poetical in his wanderings as an exile for political offence over Europe, and the dying daughter at Toulouse, and the bringing back the dead man to England, and his interment (what a lesson to political intolerance now-a-days) in the abbey where George the First, against whom he plotted, had been crowned. Of Horsely—wonderful sermon-writer of a century later, also a geometrician like Barrow—one only thinks as the fierce adversary of our Priestley; and, perhaps irreverently, in connection with old Thurlow's imprecatory vow on hearing him, then a curate, preach a good Tory sermon, that he would "make that fellow a bishop." And he did!

Of kindred nature to this didactic theology is a book, huge and appalling in form and perverse in doctrine, for it is one vast paradox from beginning to end, on which, in early manhood, I spent, not wasted, many a studious hour—"The Divine Legation of Moses"—very unsound theology, I believe, but full of good, rugged eloquence, quite characteristic of the writer, and of wondrous, variegated scholarship. It was a perfect illustration, in theological literature, of

‘taking the bull by the horns,’ an experiment for which a polemic like Warburton was well suited. When the infidel of the day asserted, and proved the premise of fact, that, inasmuch as the Mosaic dispensation did not teach accountability in another world, it could not be of God, timid controversialists went to work to try and deny the fact and twist the revelation of an hereafter out of all sorts of Pentateuchal texts. Not so bold Warburton. In legal phrase he not only ‘confessed and avoided,’ but he made the concession of the fact the basis of his argument against the conclusion. “Because,” said he, “Moses does not refer to a future state of accountability, as all worldly sovereigns and statesmen did and do of necessity, it is, that Divine interposition in his behalf, direct theocracy, is demonstrated.” Whatever may be the force or the weakness of the logic, no one can fail to be amazed and fascinated by the illustrative argument. The chapters on the analogy of the Eleusinian mysteries to the *Æneid* descent to the Hades, dwells in my memory yet, though it is many, many years since these eyes rested on it.\*

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\* “Little as the Divine Legation of Moses is now read, few works have ever produced a greater sensation on first coming out than this did. It smote Trojan and Tyrian. It was a ‘two-handed engine,’ ready to batter down infidel and orthodox alike, if they ventured to oppose an obstacle to its autoeratic progress. It lies neglected unworthily on the upper shelves of our libraries, condemned in the lump as a splendid paradox by those who little know the happy illustrations it contains, gathered from every region under heaven—the prodigious magazine of learning it unfolds—the infinite ingenuity it displays in assimilating more or less the most unpromising substances to the matter on hand—the sarcasm, the invective, the jokes, sacred

It would be dull work for the readers of to-day to pursue this train of studious recollection further, or continuously. Nor was it continuous, for, suspending it for years, neglect created a great gap, on this side of which my companionship is with men of to-day—a strange grotesque fraternity of the pulpit, Robert Hall, and Dr. Arnold, and Robertson (just dead), and last, not least, Manning. I have room but for notes on two, simply pausing to say it must have been high intellectual pleasure for manly boys to listen to Arnold, with his vigorous thought and practical illustration, rejecting, as he did, the narrow theory that the pulpit should derive no help from without, and culling his illustrations from any field of study or active life which furnished them. It was the historian of Rome teaching Christian truth. It was my fortune to read Dean Stanley's biography, then a new book, during a long sailing voyage across the Atlantic, and study the record of his ineffectual life, through all its varying phases of peculiar opinion, down to the final agony (*angina pectoris*) which fatally crushed his noble heart; and my fortune later, almost by accident, to stand before his grand life-like portrait in the hall at Foxhow. Those great eyes look upon me yet. His seems to have been a long struggle for nothing. His was a rebellious, yet, in essentials, submissive heart, and his life, as I have said, was ineffectual.\*

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and profane, which are there found—'mingle, mingle, mingle,' as they were poured forth from the cauldron of that most capacious and most turbulent mind."—*Quarterly Review*, Vol. 38, p. 309.

\* My companion in the visit to Foxhow was one whose pen has too long been mute—the author of Philip Van Artevelde.

But not so much so, for he taught successfully, as that other bright man of to-day, Robertson. He was pure and noble, but distressingly crotchety. The hundreds and thousands who, in this country, have read his life and sermons, hardly know what to make of them or him. Churchman he was in no essential sense, and surely not a technical dissenter, not Tractarian, not Ritualist, not (here too, I speak technically) Evangelical, but a strange combination of all. He never was meant for a clergyman, but a soldier—a robust Captain Vickers—and he chafed fearfully in the clerical harness. There is, if memory serves me, in one of Miss Edgeworth's novels, a character which, though not altogether admirable, somehow typifies Robertson—a young man who, from sordid motives, becomes a clergyman, and writhes with agony in his chains. There was nothing sordid about Robertson, but there was almost as much misery in his false position as if there had been. There was a robust honesty in all he said—a candid and fearless expression of sympathy which is very winning. Hence his thorough fellow-feeling with the working-men around him—not 'restless politician sympathy,' but complete accord of heart. It crops out everywhere. He delivers a course of sermons on St. Paul's Corinth Epistles, which, one would think, could have little relation to commerce and commercial habits. But the Corinthians were inveterate traders, and thus the preacher characterizes in words, every one of which is truth, the spirit of trade. It is all I have room or inclination to quote. "Trade," says he, "only requires a clear head, a knowledge of accounts, and a certain clever capacity. It becomes a



life of routine at last, which does not teach one moral truth, or, to any extent, enlarge the mind of man. The danger of a mere trading existence is that it leaves the soul engaged, not in producing, but in removing productions from one place to another; it buries the heart in the task of money-getting; and, measuring the worthiness of manhood and of all things by what they severally are worth, worships mammon instead of God. Such were the rich merchants of Corinth!" Some Brighton parishioners, whose week-days were passed in the cold shadow of Gresham's statue, must have started as they heard these words. If Robertson was eccentric in his failures, there is a living man who has been so in success, for it is success, be the career what it may, to win one's way to its honours. Such is Henry Edward Manning, not yet sixty years of age; a poor vicar once in Sussex, then an archdeacon, a 'pervert,' a secular priest doing humble missionary work in the purlieus of London, a preacher (for such he was in 1859) in the streets of Rome, and now a titular archbishop, with a cardinal's hat in prospect. Scoff not, Protestant reader, at these honours. Do not fancy, because the Holy Father has for a time fallen or is a prisoner, that the dignities he bestows are worthless. They are at least picturesque, though it is not of them I meant to write, but of less perilous and disputable things. The 'perverts' of the Anglican Church are dangerous adversaries in this, that their leaders—at least two of them—are masters of English style, not lumbering bullies of controversy like Hale and Cullen, or half-English, half-Latin composite writers such as Cardinal Wiseman eminently was, but

men whose mother tongue was English and whose pens were trained in what I have sought to show is the great and sound school of Anglican theological composition. No one can read a page of that wonderful volume of venial egotism, the *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, without being struck with this: "Equally is it manifest in Manning's sermons, those, I mean, preached before his secession. Those since, I have not seen; nor did I care, though the chance was within my reach, to listen to his spoken words, doubtless of eloquence, in the Roman piazzas, eleven years ago. There are certain crucial topics which test especially a preacher's powers, and discretion too, and in which the dexterous handling of words is needed. Any one may preach on 'Charity' and the simple elemental virtues, or their correlative crimes. Nay, the common dogmas of theology are within easy reach. Of not such, is that greatest of mysteries—as mysterious in the buried and the budding grain as in the human grave—the 'Resurrection of the Body.' But let the curious reader get Archdeacon Manning's sermon on this theme, and unless his heart be callous, his brain sluggish and slow to move upon its hinges, and his sense of the beautiful in rhetorical art as inert as his or hers who prefers a frame meeting-house to a Cathedral, he will be stirred to admiration, and come closer to conviction than he ever dreamed it to be possible.

It lies before me as I write, and, critically and æsthetically, it is worth study. It is relatively very brief—measured by the voice and ear, not more than half an hour. It is argumentative, and it is poetical. It teaches, and it convinces. But it is its marvellous

English that the scholar wonders at. It is English 'pure and simple.' There is no more Latinizing than in Cobbett or Swift, and yet there is a rhetorical and rhythmical polish and grace which neither has. In one long sentence, or *congeries* of sentences, of one hundred and eighty-two words, there are but seventeen of Latin root, and but ten longer than disyllables. Take one, and but one, beautiful passage, and my idle rambling among sermons is ended :

"After all our toiling and self-chastisement, there still remains with us a mysterious evil; and a deep consciousness is ever telling us that, do what we may, we must bear the grave-clothes of the fall till the morning of the resurrection; that we must suffer under the load of an imperfect nature, until God shall resolve our sullied manhood into its original dust, and gather it up once more in a restored purity. The hope of the resurrection is the stay of our souls when they are wearied and baffled in striving against the disobedience of our passive nature. At that day we shall be delivered from the self which we abhor, and be all pure as the angels of God. O healing and kindly death, which shall refine our mortal flesh to a spiritual body, and make our lower nature chime with the eternal will in faultless harmony!"

This, in to-day's judgment, may be poor philosophy, or rank superstition; but it is charming English.

## THE NAPIERS.

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NOR the Lords or the Logarithms, but the scholar-soldiers of England, the wonderful brotherhood who fought so well, and wrote as well as they fought; not silent, placid soldiers, observant of decorum and reserve, like Wellington and Clyde (the latter of whom always seemed, next to one nearer home, the *beau idéal* of a gentle hero), but good sound lovers and haters, always with a stock on hand of saints or demons; fierce, ready controversialists, and yet withal so grandly martial that one cannot, in reading history, refrain from pausing to wonder at them;—such were Charles and William Napier, the conqueror of Scinde, and the historian of the Peninsula. Theirs was strange, historic blood, at least on one side.

If any curious student, with an eye to the beautiful, will visit the Art Department in the Astor Library, and open the third volume of the collected works of Sir Joshua Reynolds—him who, of England's limners, is alone thought worthy of Florentine association—he will find the engraving of a lovely woman, in classic garb, sacrificing to the Graces. In 'George Selwyn's correspondence,' on the same shelves—a frivolous book of pleasant gossip—will be found the same 'thing of beauty' on a reduced scale, a half-length, which seems to me the idealization of loveliness. There is somewhere a head of Lady Hamilton, by Romney, which

perhaps equals it; but all else, Gunnings and Townsends and Lepels, are feeble in comparison—dowdies of the past. This was Sarah Lennox, the peerless beauty of the Third Georgian era, at whose feet a monarch languished with as much ardour as his nature admitted—the sainted blind mother of the Napiers of our day and generation. She was in the rich glow of youthful beauty, making hay in front of Holland House, of which her elder sister was mistress, when George the Third was a susceptible young man of twenty-two; and she died, as recently as 1826, as I have said, the mother of heroes. She, this fascinating, erring, and venerated woman, had a picturesque pedigree and a strange career. There was flowing in her veins heroic and erotic blood, in nearly equal parts the *sangre azul* (if blue it be) of Charles the Second and Henry of Navarre. Her great-grandmother was one of Charles's peculiar peeresses, Louisa de Querouaille, Duchess of Portsmouth; her nephew, he who rode carelessly and jauntily, *en amateur*, by the side of Wellington in the fiercest fire of Waterloo; and her oldest son, the mutilated soldier of Coruña—for he was shot almost to death—the victor of Meanee and Hyderabad, and conqueror of Scinde.

It was an age of questionable innocence, that of the early part of 'good' King George's reign; for though his ugly German Queen, with all the virtue-pride of grim purity, tried her best to assert strict discipline at court, there were frail Duchesses of Graftons and Ladies Di Beauclercs and Sarah Bunburies not far off. 'Our beauty,' the Sarah Lennox of story, married a jolly, heartless, fox-hunting baronet—a sort, as I im-

agine, of equestrian Geoffrey Delmaine—a friend of Lord Carlisle and Doctor Warner and “Old Q.,” and they went on an hyméneal frolic to Paris during the brief période of peace, and chronic intensity of depravity, between 1763 and the accession of Louis XVI. “There lived,” says Thackeray, in the *Virginians*, “during the last century, a certain French duke and marquis who distinguished himself in Europe, and America likewise, and has obliged posterity by leaving behind him a choice volume of memoirs, which the gentle reader is especially warned not to consult. Having performed the part of Don Juan in his own country, in ours, and in other parts of Europe, he has kindly noted down the names of many court beauties who fell victims to his fascinations; and very pleasing, no doubt, it must be for the grandsons and descendants of the fashionable persons among whom our brilliant nobleman moved, to find the names of their ancestresses adorning M. le Duc’s sprightly pages, and their frailties recorded by the candid writer who caused them.” The wretched story of that Frenchman’s life, to its ending under the guillotine, mainly told by himself, now lies before me. Writing in desultory form about books, let me say, that the genuineness of the ‘*Memoires de Lauzun*’ is an unsolved problem of literature, a vexed question of criticism. It is so scandalous and defamatory that De Quincey says of it, “on the hypothesis most favourable to the writer, the basest of men, he is self-denounced as vile enough to have forged the stories he tells, and cannot complain if he should be roundly accused of doing that which he has taken pains to prove himself capable of doing.” Harshly

skeptical as is this judgment, it is not a whit too harsh ; but I dissent, as a close student of the matter, from the skepticism. The vile book can be demonstrated to be genuine. High historical authority, such as Sir Augustus Foster, so pronounces it, and Moore's gossip confirms it. In his diary, that dreary record of tuft-hunting dinners, he says : " Sate next to Lady E. Stuart ; she told me that the *Memoirs of the Duc de Lauzun* (which, of course, she did not own to have read) were supposed to be genuine, but not true. Lord Thanet saw nothing improbable in them, but found them dull from their probability."

If genuine and authentic, no one need look farther than this record of brazen iniquity to know how the beautiful Sarah Lennox fell, or wonder at the next phase in her life—a Parliamentary dissolution of her marriage with Sir Charles Bunbury in 1776. Divorces then, as we all know, were granted for but one cause, and the purity of descent of the peerage and gentry was guarded by the strange ethical but sound political rule, that only one sex could sin with impunity. Such was the fall,—now for the resurrection.

Not long after the divorce (and it had been a childless connection), Sarah Lennox married the Hon. George Napier, and from that hour to the day of her death, a period of half a century, her life was of innocence, and gentleness, and peace ; and there is something touching in the affectionate pathos with which, amid all the dangers on the battle-field, and in the agony of wounds believed to be mortal, these rugged soldiers thought and spoke of the sainted blind mother at home. Virtue-proud women, wheresoe'er

you be (and nowhere are there more than among those who speak our mother-language), pause on such a tale as this, in no sense exaggerated or misstated, and judge gently of your erring sisters! The long, tranquil evening of this beautiful woman's day has something in it strangely picturesque.

But of the sons, a triumvirate of heroes—for one, George, I have omitted to mention—Charles, the elder, died in 1853, and William, the historian, wrote his biography. The younger brother's career has also been told, for they are all dead now.

The life and diaries of Charles James Napier form, to my unmilitary mind, one of the most charming volume, or volumes, in the English language. If Southey's 'Nelson' be, as it should, the text-book of the British Navy, then ought this Napier story to be in every soldier's hand. It is neither a rare nor an expensive book, and not a very new one, and yet I regret to record, except in private libraries, it is not easily accessible. It is not in Mr. Astor's collection, and I am compelled to refer to it, guided only by the uncertain, fragmentary light which fading memory gives. It shines chiefly on Coruña, Virginia, and India—a strange collocation, but a strictly accurate one,—and my hope in pointing to them (for I can do no more), is to win some intelligent reader to the pleasure I have had. Remember, I write in no sense technically, for the jargon of war is hateful; still less presuming to form judgment of the multitudinous controversies, military and political, in which the uneasy spirit of Napierism was chronically involved.

There are scenes of history on which one loves to



dwell. Is not the great retreat from Cunaxa one, with its glimpses of the distant sea and the Greek 'Thalatta?' And is there not another, the dark retreat in Spain of a small British army before the French host, in this very month of November, with shortening days and gloomy nights, sixty-two years ago, from Astorga, to Coruña, and their sight of the sea, tenantless in that winter evening, and no rescuing relief or squadron at hand to save them? In every step of that retreat these brothers were hand in hand. They were together when the terrible explosion took place, the sequel of which, history (William's) describes in one grand sentence: "Stillness, slightly interrupted by the waves of the shore, succeeded, and the business of war went on." As Charles Napier was going into battle, a wounded officer on a stretcher was brought out, and as they passed, it was said, in answer to a casual inquiry, 'It is Captain George Napier, mortally wounded!' There, Sir John Moore fell, with the ghastly wound of a cannon-ball grazing his breast, "breaking the ribs over his heart, and tearing the muscles of the breast into long stripes, interlaced by the recoil from the dragging of the shot;" and no sigh or groan from the dying man's lips, but only the "I would rather my sword should go out of the field with me," and the last words—worth thousands of 'I die content,' and 'Kiss me, Hardy'—in which there was a gentle expression of hope, almost amounting to a prayer: 'I trust the people of England will be satisfied; I hope my country will do me justice.' George Napier recovered from his wounds, and Charles, shockingly mutilated, and his life saved by the intercession of a little drummer-

boy, fell a prisoner in the hands of the triumphant French. It was the day of harsh warfare, of the refusal of cartels, and of Verdun, and it is part of the romance of this strange story, minutely told in the diaries,—the chivalric kindness of the French to their prisoner, his reputed death at home, and the sorrows of the blind mother to whose darkened orbs the privilege of tears was left. To those curious in such matters—the literature of war—I may be allowed to refer to the model dispatch of General Hope, who on the death of Sir John Moore, was left in command, descriptive of what had occurred. It will be found in the Annual Register of 1809.

The wounded soldier of Coruña saw no service until he was sent with the expeditionary force which landed at the Capes of Virginia in 1814. It was a very small affair, our war of 1812—an unnatural sort of procedure from first to last, and with no other fruit than the assertion of an existence on the ocean,—for we secured no one of the objects for which we went to war. Our military operations, when we tried to be aggressive, as in Canada, were impotent; and so were those of Great Britain against us in the Chesapeake and at New Orleans. Napier landed with Admiral Cochrane's forces, first in North Carolina and then on the Yorktown peninsula, and 'assisted,' as the phrase is, in the burning of Hampton—that unlucky village, which seems destined to invaders' flames. Here is it that a high-spirited soldier like Charles Napier, in his diary records that, while he did not at all mind killing a Frenchman, he could not conquer his repugnance to do the same thing to one

who asked for quarter in the mother tongue. "It seemed," says he, "like killing one of my own countrymen." Virginia and this peninsula have seen the same bloody doings in our own days—Americans butchered by Americans. 'Big Bethel' is not far from the spot where Napier felt a scruple.

From Virginia in 1813, to India in 1843, is a wide interval of time and space. The young captain of the beginning of the century had become an old man and a general, and in an emergency was sent for to take command in Western India. He hesitated; he was old and infirm, and India was a field to which he was not used. He consulted the Duke of Wellington, and gossip says the Duke settled it by saying: "Charles, if you don't go, I shall." He went, and in the winter of 1842-3 was at his post. It was at a crisis of England's colonial empire. Lord Ellenborough, the Governor-General, had just ordered a medal to be struck at the Calcutta mint commemorative of perfect reconciliation, with the motto, "*Pax Asiæ Restituta*," when war broke out all around him. Napier came to the rescue, and at the head of a small band of English and native troops, then faithful, took the field. Far away in the sterile spot the Indus skirts, is a fortress called Enmangur—a Gibraltar of the East. Napier advanced on it, telling those who came to threaten or propitiate, "Neither your Deserts nor your negotiations shall stop the British army;" and they advanced, and on the 17th of February, 1843, was fought the bloody battle of Meanee, two thousand seven hundred English and native troops against twenty thousand intrenched Belooches and Sikhs. Scinde was subdued and sub-

jected to British rule, and the clever *tour de mot* was invented—for Napier never said it—“*Peccavi*,” “I have Scinde.” Equally apocryphal is Lord Dalhousie’s “*Vovi*,” “I have Oude.”

Meanee was fought, as I have said, on the 17th of February, 1843, and one of the heroes of that day was Sir John Pennefather, ten years later a hero of Inkerman. What is it that makes these old English soldiers—Wellington at eighty, Sir De Lacy Evans at eighty-five, Lord Gough at ninety—so interesting? Our American veterans run to seed or to senile efflorescence, as did General Scott. On the 17th of February, 1859, it was the lot of him who writes these lines to meet, while wandering among the fortifications and narrow streets of Valetta, this hero of Meanee and Inkerman, as fresh as a young man, and with my hand on his saddle-bow to talk as if he were an old friend with the great lieutenant of Napier.

Sir Charles Napier’s career in the East ended by his own act, in fierce controversy, and he never took service again. He was a pall-bearer for his great commander, and soon after sank to rest.\*

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\* This little essay, on its first appearance, brought to me a letter which gratified me not a little from a lady whose name I have never ascertained, and from which I venture to extract these few words. “I have always been enthusiastic about that remarkable triad of brothers, and I thank you for your sympathetic appreciation of their greatness, of rather a different stamp from the Brummagem metal now passing current with us. I pray your pardon for this seeming intrusion,—it was irresistible to say to you that to a distant and always-to-bé-unknown reader you have given hours of exceeding pleasure,—that one who also loves good old books welcomes eagerly your loving touch of these dear friends.”

## THE STUART BOOKS.

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THESE notes, thus far, have been confined strictly, not only to English literature, but to it in its most familiar form—beaten tracks where every one has walked, common books which every one has read. There has been no attempt at novelty, and probably not a thought that has not occurred to every mind directed in the same course and having the same aims. Now that they are drawing to an end, I venture—adhering, however, to a theme not un-English—to annotate one, if not two, foreign books. They both, in different forms and languages, relate to the same sad story—the inglorious ending of the wayward, unhappy race which, for centuries, reigned in Scotland, and, for a hundred and eleven years, governed or misgoverned England.

If poor Mary Stuart, whether of Scott or Froude or Schiller, of romance or history, could, in her gayest or her saddest hour, have looked beyond the grave, and seen the destiny of her child's child and his children's children, she might well have envied the lot of her rival, who died childless. A grandson murdered before a hard-hearted populace—for Charles I.'s death, admitting all his faults, was a murder. A great-grandson an exile and a pensioned wanderer, with two daughters—each a queen, and each childless. And

then two generations more—one of restless and impotent intrigue, and another, and the last, of heroic adventure and chivalry in youth, and, in age, of wretched, sensual animal decay. A titular king married in old age to a beautiful and intellectual woman, and ending his career a bigot and a drunkard, and his brother a priest. And this was the bitter end.

It is to this beautiful woman's strange career that these two books relate. They are biographical 'studies' of Louisa, Princess of Stolberg and Countess of Albany, wife and widow of Charles Edward, the last Stuart, and mistress of Alfieri, dying—almost in our day—in 1824. One, and the most elaborate and with the widest continental reputation, is that of Alfred de Reumont, for many years Prussian Minister at the court of the last Grand Duke of Tuscany, and of course resident of Florence, filled with Alfieri memories and Stuart traditions. The other is a sketch, in French, by Sainte-René Taillandier, originally, I believe, contributed to the *Revue de Deux Mondes*. Never were two works—if works they may be called—less alike. The Frenchman writes dogmatically and positively, with a certain pretentious air, but in a beautifully lucid style which is charming. The German, cautiously and critically, collating authorities when authority is hardly needed, and crowding, *more Teutonico*, into parentheses, huge masses of facts and dates and doctrines. He begins with a description of his heroine's tomb in Santa Croce, wanders off into picturesque illustrations of Italian life and Scottish and English traditions, and does not reach the birth till page 133 of the first volume. His French competitor thus rather illnaturedly

describes him: "In many parts of his book the diplomat interferes with the historian. M. de Reumont understands the laws of etiquette so thoroughly, he has so profound a respect for Continental aristocracy, that he cannot pass any historical character of eminence by without making all sorts of reverence. He salutes him, he enumerates his titles, and sets forth his full genealogy. One of his chapters actually resembles an article of the *Almanach de Gotha*." This is all grotesquely true, and yet, De Reumont's book, now in the hands, for translation, of one of our fair countrywomen, is the standard work on a subject which is always interesting. And why interesting? Why is it that we read of and care about these wretched kings and princesses—real or pretended—of the past? If the skeptic wants an answer to this, let him remember that tragedy, the mistress of the willing soul, never stoops below the grade of princes and lovers, and be content with the fact. Adam Smith considered this question long ago in that most captivating of neglected books, '*The Theory of Moral Sentiments*,' and I assume the fact without discussing it.

But is there not another reason why, around this king of shreds and tatters—I mean the Countess of Albany's first husband—literary interest should crystallize? Has it not been touched by the hand of the necromancer? Was it not his first theme? Is not *Waverley* a classic? Old enough to remember when the great unknown was really unknown, I look back to the reading of what was then 'sixty,' and is now a hundred and twenty-five years 'since,' as if it were a thing of yesterday. The gathering of the clans in the

fastnesses of Glennaquoich ; the capture and rescue of the Southern Jacobite, and Rose Bradwardine's flitting plaid in the brigand's hut ; the Chevalier's court at Edinburgh, and the stray shot from the castle rolling down the street ; the Baron at prayers ; Preston Pans and dying Gardiner and Colonel Talbot ; and the advance to Derby and the retreat, and Callum Beg's split skull on the field of Falkirk, and the end ; and Flora's winding-sheet, and Fergus's dead march, and the bloody heads over the gates of Carlisle. Years ago I passed that odd, dismal old town, and my only association with it, or thought about it, was of Fergus MacIvor and poor Evan Dhu, with their blanched faces turned toward Scotland. How thoroughly has this wonderful romance impregnated the popular mind ! I knew one of its illustrations once cleverly used in political discussion, at least so a sympathizing audience seemed to think. "Had the government," said a public speaker in the early heat of our civil war, "never gone beyond the limits of consent ; had it rejected, as did its founders, the heresy of force and the idea of a strong government, it would have been stronger in the true elements of republican power than it is in all the parade and panoply of successful war. I never hear of this notion of 'power' and 'strength' without recalling an illustration which fiction and romance afford. You have all read Scott's great epic of 'Waverley,' and remember its catastrophe, where the heroine is found working her brother's shroud ; and when she is told, by way of support and consolation, that she must rely upon her 'strength of mind' to bear up against her misery, the convulsive, agonized reply is : 'Ay !



there it is—there is a busy devil at my heart that whispers, though it is madness to listen to it, that it is this very strength on which I prided myself that has murdered my brother.’ Take care the strength of the government don’t murder our liberties.” This may be pestilent heresy, but it was not bad rhetoric.

The traditions of this last of the Stuarts made themselves part of Scott’s sentimentally Jacobite nature, and years after his painting of the gay revels and bright adventures of the ’45, he went back to its hero and gave us the sombre picture of “Redgauntlet,” the best of his later novels. The mythical or actual visit of the Pretender to England was in 1750, and the scene London, too soon for the contrast the novelist wished to present between the young man and the old one, and he pushed it forward ten years, when his prince was much more in decay and decadence than he has portrayed him. It is of “Redgauntlet” that Lockhart says: “The reintroduction of the adventurous hero of 1745, in the dulness and dimness of advancing age and fortunes hopelessly blighted, and the presenting him with whose romantic portraiture at an earlier period historical truth had been so admirably blended, as the moving principle of events not only entirely but notoriously imaginary” (Lockhart possibly did not believe the Doctor King legend), “this was a rash experiment; yet had there been no ‘Waverley,’ I am persuaded the fallen and faded Ascanius of ‘Redgauntlet’ would have been pronounced a masterpiece.” Thackeray tried his master hand on this Stuart theme, but it was of the Pretender *père* he wrote, and whom he so grandly painted in “Esmond.”

But let my notes go back to the actual romance of history, 'pure and simple'—the last years of Charles Edward,—the whole life of Louisa of Albany. The melodrama opens with a catastrophe, Old Louis XIV. was, in vulgar phrase, a trump of a king. He had an eye for the picturesque of action, and never showed it more than when, as Mme. de Sevigné records and Miss Agnes Strickland and M. De Reumont repeat, he escorted the first exiled Stuarts (taking the little questionable Prince of Wales in his lap), and welcomed them to St. Germain, where he protected them so long. Sixty years after, in 1748, the grandson of these exiles, fresh from his Scottish heroism, was alone in Paris, the old French King dead, and his grandson, with Madame de Pompadour, reigning in his place. It was then, that, on one Tuesday night in December, twenty-five men of the Royal Guard, '*avec poudre et plomb, mais sans tambour,*' were detailed for special duty. They watched the Opera-house, and when the poor Prince came out he was seized and gagged and bound, says the courtly annalist, Barbier, '*avec un cordon de soie,*' and carried in a postchaise to Vincennes, and his attendants sent to the Bastille. In five days more he was hurried by force to the Swiss frontier and literally sent adrift. Thus, at the bidding of Sir Robert Walpole and the little soldier of Dettingen, did the grandson of Louis XIV. treat the grandson of James II. For twenty-two weary years he drifted about. Avignon—part of Pontifical dominion then—Spain, Germany, Poland, England, for a moment saw but did not welcome the wanderer, not always, though at last, a lonely one. For twelve years, he had

near him a true friend, and for seven, a little fair-haired daughter. At last they were taken from him, and he was thoroughly a lonely, listless man. If ever royal exile, with the Stuart weaknesses in his bones and blood, had an excuse for seeking forgetfulness by any means, Charles Edward had; and 1770, when the wanderings seemed to come to an end, found him fifty years of age and a drunkard; when, so says the French biographer, with odd anti-climax, "he was in the habit of beating his servants, his friends, the lords and nobles of his court, just as he beat the soldiers of General Cope at Preston Pans."

Degraded indeed must have been the politics of Europe when such a man could be thought of as an agent of revolution; yet so it was, and twice within one year. In 1770, the Duc de Choiseul, then on the edge of his fall, sent for him, at midnight, to come to Paris, and on his arrival found him so drunk he could make no use of him; and, in 1771, what may be termed the Dubarri Ministry brought him thither again, gave him a pension of two hundred and forty thousand livres on one condition: "*Soyez époux et père,*" and, in order to raise up a race of disquieting pretenders, so as to counterbalance the rapid progeny of young King George and faithful and prolific Queen Charlotte, the battered inebriate of fifty-one agreed to marry the young and pretty Princess of Stolberg, just nineteen years of age. "*Egöistes calculs de la politique,*" solemnly says M. de Taillandier. At Macerata, not far from Ancona, the wedding took place, 'the blue-eyed blonde, blazing with grace and beauty,' and the prematurely old man, 'who knelt painfully on the velvet cushion;'

and Monsignore Peruzzini blessed them, and a medal was struck, *O! vanitas vanitatum*, in honour—so reads the inscription—of ‘Charles III., King of England, France, and Ireland, and Louisa his Queen.’ To Rome sped ‘the happy pair;’ but Rome was not what it once was to the Stuarts. A very liberal pontiff was in the Vatican, fonder of the fine arts than of dogmatic or any other kind of theology, and the Jesuits were on the unwilling wing. In 1739, a royal guard had been mounted on Monte Cavallo, and James III. was King, in form at least. In 1772, all was lost, even honour, and “Charles III.” was simply Charles Stuart. It was dreary work for the bride. These biographers give minute details of that sad existence. There is something painfully ludicrous in the picture, especially when the story-telling torture was added to all others. A witness of it writes from Rome: “One sees in the Palazzo Muti, where they live, four or five gentlemen with their wives, old and faithful friends, to whom the Pretender for the thousandth time tells the story of his Scotch adventures. The Queen is of middle height, blonde, with deep blue eyes; she has a nose slightly *retroussé*, and a complexion of dazzling white and red, like an Englishwoman. Her expression is bright and captivating. Fancy such a woman, so cheering and intelligent, shut up in the musty court of old Jacobites! She laughs heartily, as if she had heard it for the first time, when her husband tells of his disguising himself as a woman in order to escape the Duke of Cumberland’s soldiers. I found,” the narrator adds, “the story pleasant enough at first, but it rather flagged after hearing it once or twice.” The coming

jubilee of 1774 drove them away from the Eternal City, which, together, they never again saw, the poor old man returning there, fourteen years later, to die.

Then follows, as a pendant to the Florentine sojourn, the story of Alfieri's love, which, in their odd way, one French and the other German, these rival writers tell, and to which no note would do justice. The Prince continued to get drunker and drunker, and maltreat his young wife, and that primmest and dullest of all diplomats, Sir Horace Mann (why is it that Walpole's pet correspondents were all so dull?) duly reported to his court the progress of degradation and debauch. While at Florence, Charles Edward wrote one letter, reproduced by M. de Reumont, which has a critical and an American interest. The critical value of it is that it illustrates the importance of printing documents with literal accuracy when errors and blemishes of spelling or grammar tell anything. Here they show, *valeat quantum*, that the Pretender really understood the English language, for though he misspells and uses awkward and obsolete phrases, he writes idiomatically. The paper is historically curious, as revealing a flash of hope and interest in the affairs of the 'old country' and of ours. On the 5th January, 1778—for news travelled slowly then—he writes to a friend in Rome of what had happened six months before: "I suppose you will have already heard of Ge Burgoyne's entier defete; him and his hole army taken prisoners. I have just new got accounts from Paris by a veridick person that Dr. Franklin had received a courier from La Rochelle with certain accounts that General Waginston had attacked Gal. Hove, that was already blocked up at

Philadelphia; and that, after a most bloody battle, Howe and all his army remaining living were made prisoners to ye number of 17,000 and effective men. It is said the Elector of Hanover has broke ye parlement; if all this bee confirmed, you may judge what a confusion it must make at London. Woud wish you gave me your opinion what you think ye consequences of all these events may produse."

The beating and the drunkenness continued, all duly reported to the Elector of Hanover's Foreign Secretary, till at last the woman fled, and, after a brief effort at seclusion and decorum, and some ineffectual remonstrances from her respectable but very dull brother-in-law, the Cardinal Duke of York, joined her dramatic lover, though she didn't live with him till nearly four years afterward, when the public association began, whatever it was, which ended only with the lover's death. In April, 1784, 'the legitimate King of Great Britain,' as, in the paper, he styled himself, gave a sort of sovereign consent to her living where she pleased and doing what she pleased. The wretched old man looked round for companionship and found it in his illegitimate daughter Miss Walkinshaw, now a woman of thirty years, from whom he had been separated for more than twenty, and who had been all the time at the convent at Meaux. She joined him in Italy, and never left him till the drama closed, four years later. She became the titular *duchess* of Albany. The dreary ending had some flashes of interest. Occasionally the fumes would be dissipated, and the debilitated brain would resume its functions: "Mr. Greathed, a friend of Mr. Fox," says De Reumont, "visited him

just before his death. They were alone. The conversation turned on 1745. At first, the Prince was reserved; the memories of the past seemed to pain him; but Mr. Greathed, with earnestness and yet with delicacy, pressing him, he seemed suddenly, as it were, to fling a great weight from his crushed spirit; his eye brightened, his countenance, usually stolid, became animated. He began the narrative of his campaign with almost boyish energy; he spoke of his marches, his victories, his flight amidst fearful dangers, the absolute devotion of the Scotch, and the bloody fate of so many of them. When he came to this point in his narrative, though forty years of weary existence had intervened, the recollection of the death and sufferings of his followers became so vivid and so agonizing that suddenly the words faded from his lips and he sank with a sort of convulsion into a fainting fit." This is not the narrative of Frenchman or German, but of a cool-headed, guarded English witness. The end was near. On the 30th of January, 1788, he died in the arms of his daughter, who, in little over a year, followed him to the grave, and 'Henry IX. of England,' a childless priest, succeeded. With them ended every known trace, legitimate or illegitimate, of the Stuarts of Scotland and England. M. Taillandier has many pages of fine writing on the wife's desertion of the old man, and the remorse he supposes to be comprised in the three mild Italian words in which her lover describes the conjugal woe: "I saw," says Alfieri in his 'Memoirs,' "to my great surprise, that, on the receipt of the news of her husband's death, she was *non poca compunta!*"

These notes cannot be protracted through the long period of the joint lives of these strange beings, nor of that of the survivor—their ramblings and escapes—the presentation of the Pretender's widow at the 'Elector of Hanover's' Court, and the pension of £1600 she was willing to accept; of Alfieri's death in 1803, and the succession of the young painter Xavier Fabre; of the literary reign on the Lung' Arno, where she was a sort of Italian Countess of Cork, down to her death, seventy-two years old, in 1824. Is not all this pleasantly told by M. de Reumont, and is this not that at which the French biographer so loftily sneers, though everybody reads such literary gossip with avidity?

"I don't pretend," says M. Taillandier, "to enumerate all who, from 1814 to 1824, composed the court of the Queen of Florence. M. de Reumont has given most of them. Like a true master of ceremonies, he announces solemnly all the illustrious personages, and, in subdued tones, tells their history. No detail escapes him. He knows the title and connections of all the English nobility who come to salute Madame d'Albany. He is acquainted with the private history of all the great ladies, and even of the Secretaries of Legation." He knows exactly the part played by every cardinal in the last conclave; what is the forte of every strange poet, or painter, or sculptor, who had arrived from Rome or Naples, Milan or Venice. He is never at a loss. He is never so happy as when describing the retinue of a peeress. It is the Duchess of Devonshire, or Cardinal Consalvi, or Lady Jersey, or the poet Rogers, or Byron's friend Hobhouse, or Ireland's poet Moore, or Lord John Russell, or the great historian of sculpture



Cicognara, or greatest of all (so M. Taillandier thinks) Lamartine or Chateaubriand. It is a perfectly Homeric catalogue. It, nevertheless, was very good company, and this was a bright society which clustered round the restless old lady at the innocent close of her eventful life.

Here end these desultory Stuart annotations, and yet it would be wrong to close them without an acknowledgment, due from every scholar interested in the theme, to one living man with whom this exploration of these Stuart traditions, in a truly catholic spirit, has always been a labour of love. I mean Earl Stanhope, better known in historic literature as Lord Mahon. Citations from his works fairly bristle on M. de Reumont's scholarly pages, and it is at his instance that the translation of so valuable a work for the first time into English is now in progress on this side of the Atlantic. It is, in brief space and compact form, the story of a century, from 1720, when Charles Edward was born, to 1824, when his widow died.

Has the daring speculation not entered the reader's mind whether, putting aside all the jargon of history, all the postulates of party, England might not have fared as well had the Stuarts never been exiled and the Hanoverians never come in? Religious liberty and Protestantism were beyond the reach of kings or princes. The Stuarts, at least, were Englishmen, with Englishmen's instincts, and as to morals, the champions of Hanover have not much to boast of on that score. Antony Hamilton tells no worse tales than does Lord Hervey, and "Take care of poor Nellie" sounds more pleasantly than Queen Caroline's dying "*Cela n'empêche*

*pas*," when George II., in an agony of tears, resisted her request to marry again, by the blubbering out, "*Oh ! non, j'aurai des maîtresses.*" It has been somewhere said that nothing so conclusively proves the crimes of the Stuarts as the English people being content with the early Georges.

## THE BRITISH THEATRE— MRS. INCHBALD.

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As with scientific theology and law, so with any ethical question about the drama, printed or acted, these notes have naught to do. There have been theatricals from the day of Sennacherib to our own, some twenty-five centuries, and, if the crack of doom be so long deferred, there will be actors and acting for as many more. The love of mimic representation is as near an instinct of our nature as may be, and, though there are men, and women too, who pretend they have no enjoyment in the theatre and really have a scruple about it, if, from the life of ordinary humanity, all dramatic memories could be obliterated, the residuum would be flat indeed. I have known a pure, and excellent, and religious woman, whose life was protracted far beyond the Scriptural limit, cheered to the end by bright recollections of the stage, and now, when I see a gray head, an old man, sitting by his daughter or grand-daughter, innocently enjoying a play, my Puritanism is conscious of no shock. Every student recalls Sir Walter Scott's beautiful apologetic essay on the subject, written in the last hours of his happy life, and on the edge of the dismal chasm into which he was plunged. It is a charming paper in every sense. His

excuse is all summed up in a few lines, and one detects the lurking fun, and sees a merry twinkle of the great blue eye as he gravely wrote: "We" (for he was writing as a reviewer), "we frankly confess one may be better employed than in witnessing the best and most moral play that ever was acted, but the same may be said of every action of our lives except devotion to God and benevolence to man." And, with this comfortable postulate, he ignores the existence of austere denunciation of what was dear to his own cheerful nature, and revels in recollections of the past. The description of his first play, the great event of childhood, the rich reward of good behaviour, thought of for weeks, at least it used to be, "the unusual form of the house," "the mystic curtain, whose dusky undulations permit us, now and then, to discover the momentary glitter of some sandalled or some tiny slippered foot which trips lightly within—the slow rise of the shadowy curtain," and then! how many Pendennises, if the truth were told, have been madly in love with Mrs. Hallers, and no harm come of it! The slippered foot beneath the curtain is delicious; and I venture on one more quoted word of the old man genial: "It is now a long while since," says he, "yet we have not passed many hours of such unmixed delight; and we still remember the sadness of the sinking lights when all was over, the dispersing of the crowd, with the vain longing that the music would again sound, the magic curtain once more arise, and the enchanting dream recommence, and the astonishment with which we looked upon the apathy of our elders, who, having the means, did not spend every evening at the theatre!" Scott was a

grandfather when he thus wrote, and his biography (and where in any language is there a more lovely book?) tells us that after poverty had overtaken and palsy stricken him, and he was lying on his dying bed, when some one read aloud hard lines of Crabbe on the infirmities and frailties of actors, he bade him shut the book because "it would give poor Terry pain," the sympathies of his gentle heart shining through the clouds which had settled on his memory, for Terry had long before gone beyond the reach of human pity:

One other interlocutory remark, as lawyers would say, which this Scott reminiscence suggests. Let the outside world denounce and exorcise the theatre as it may, is it graceful for the drama to be untrue to itself? There are certain themes which written fiction, novels, and romances should never touch. There are characters and situations which the drama ought never to illustrate. Of the former are the crimes of a parent visited on an innocent child, such as the hideous picture of Dickens's paralytic old mother, or the worse one, because, as was everything he wrote, more true to nature, Thackeray's utterly scoundrelly father in 'Philip's Way Through the World.' It is, as he said of George the Third's insanity, "too terrible for tears." The curse of the second commandment is dreadful to think of. There is no use of having it, as it were, set to music and sounded in our ears when we want sweet, pleasurable melodies. So of subjects which, in its own interests, the acting drama should resent. Such are they which degrade the theatrical function, and, in its own house, hold it up to obloquy. A comedy of which the heroine's

leading impulse, charmingly portrayed, is shame because she had once been an actress, and is the daughter of an actor, and he a drunken specimen of the worst histrionic class, ought (though the process has a Celtic flavour) to be hissed off the stage by the actors themselves.\* There are temptations enough to lower the standard. They need not be encouraged. They are painful accessories that should not be exaggerated. There is an old age for the actor, and retirement, which need not be disfigured by self-inflicted stigmas. The greatest of living players, in the quiet retreat of his Dorsetshire home, doing good to all around him, looks back, I doubt not, proudly to his professional career, remembering that it was the labour of his life, and a successful one, to purify and elevate the function to which taste or necessity called him.

Mrs. Inchbald's "*British Theatre*," in its forty-seven compact duodecimos, well printed, well bound, and beautifully illustrated, is the dramatic treasury of our mother-tongue. It is the acting drama of England, from the inner edge of its licentiousness and indecency down to our day of relative literary imbecility. It is, fairly stated, the literature of a century, counting backward from 1811, the date of the last volume. And who fitter to collate and edit than this singularly clever and refined woman, actress, dramatist, novelist, to whom, by some incomprehensible neglect, so much injustice has been done? Can it be because she was, in vulgar phrase, a 'Romanist,' that the prejudice which mutines in the marrow and bones of Anglican protestantism

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\* Alberry's comedy of "*The Coquettes*."

has been operative against her? There is no novel in the language, according to my poor taste, more fascinating than her almost forgotten 'Simple Story.' It and the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' twin gems of gentle luminousness, are the only English pictures which dare to illustrate kindly the sorrows of an erring woman, and poor Miss Milner and Olivia Primrose are as beautiful impersonations as if sin and shame had never touched them. 'All of them is pure womanly.' Let any one contrast their story with Mr. Hawthorne's dreary romance, whose very title is hideous, and the merit will be manifest. Then, as a dramatist, Mrs. Inchbald had great success in her day. 'Every One Has His Fault' is a wonderfully bright play, with one character which is unique, that of the good-natured man, Mr. Harmony, who invents and utters all manner of fictions in order to make people love each other. Why is it that while the wretched trash of Holcroft and Morton and Colman (except 'The Jealous Wife' and 'The Clandestine Marriage'), and the questionable morality of Centlivre, keep the stage, this drama of Mrs. Inchbald is banished or forgotten?

Looking at the title-pages of these multitudinous volumes, one cannot fail to be struck with the vast improvement in the acting drama, even since Mrs. Inchbald's day. Few, as few as possible, are the blemishes in this series. Yet there are some. There is the 'Beaux's Stratagem,' coarse enough in single scenes, and, to my judgment, very dull reading, as it must have been dull acting, even though Garrick played Scrub and Mrs. Abingdon, Mrs. Sullen; but there is a triad of tragedies, whose very essence, the pivot

of the plot, is ineffable indecency. The 'Fair Penitent,' classic enough to have, in Lothario, created a name for all time; the 'Orphan,' worse than any; and, rather better but still very bad, 'Venice Preserved.' That part of the last which used to delight his most sacred Majesty George the Second is omitted, but still, as with Rowe's tragedy, the impulse, the moving cause of Jaffier's treason and Belvidera's woes, is an incident of gross indelicacy. Yet these, both in England and in this country, were, down to a very recent period, popular plays and performed before decorous audiences. These eyes have seen Monimia's and Calista's sorrows, and ears of to-day have heard the stately but very plain descriptions of their mistakes and weaknesses. Such plays would now be hooted from the stage, and yet the Colliers of to-day tell us the drama has not improved! Forty years ago these loathsome things were habitually represented, the expiation being that, on Christmas eve, George Barnwell and Milwood were regularly conjured up, to deter apprentices from murdering their uncles, or having to do with naughty women.

Other recollections of past studies and enjoyments are awakened by these familiar books. As if to show that, in the midst of mimic licentiousness, a solemn, sermonizing drama could be written and performed, appeared 'The Provoked Husband.' Hannah More or Mrs. Chapone might have written it, and an audience of divines might listen to it. It was, too, strange to say, an effective play upon the stage, and Mr. Manly's platitudes and the final quarrel and re-



conciliation of the aristocratic hero and heroine were made impressive by good actors. It was so in America at what may be termed the 'recitative' age, when, after a tragedy or tragi-comedy, such as the one just referred to, the audience was recreated by Collins's 'Ode to the Passions,' with a feeble orchestral accompaniment. That, however, which killed, and forever we trust, the nastiness of a century and a half ago, was not the solemn, pretentious prudery of the 'Provoked Husband' and 'that ilk,' but the advent, springing lightly and gayly into the lists, armed in brightest proof and with the sharpest weapons, of one who conquered by superior wit—him,

"The orator—dramatist—minstrel—who ran  
Through each mode of the lyre and was master of all.

The 'School for Scandal,' the 'Rivals,' and the 'Critic' (too rarely played), demolished, or took captive and locked up, never to be extricated, the Congreves and Wycherleys and Vanbrughs of a century before. There is something absolutely weird about the marvellous genius of Sheridan. He did, as Lord Byron said, the best of everything—made the greatest speech ever heard in Parliament, wrote the best comedy, the best English opera, the best farce, the best epilogue, and, bad as was his only tragedy, and it a translation, Rolla's talk to the Peruvians did good work in its day. Very drunk he often was, very unscrupulous generally, but surely these sins carried penalty enough along with them. There has always seemed to me something inexpressibly sad, far worse than the mythical seizure of the dead man by the bailiffs, in the

record, kept by the Prince Regent himself, of his meeting 'poor old Sheridan,' as he styles him, in shabby raiment in the streets of Brighton, and the broken-hearted man turning down a by-road to avoid the encounter of the host of the Pavilion. But all and enduring honour to his literary genius! Whose is there, in its way, like it? Here, in 1870, are played, and well played, his two great comedies, and if the innocent merriment which Sir Peter and Mrs. Malaprop have for a century provoked avails for mercy; if Sir Lucius O'Trigger and Lady Teazle, as perfectly represented now and here as they were by Johnston and Miss Farren, are intercessory spirits, then 'poor old Sherry' must be happy and at peace. The 'School for Scandal' is contemporary with our Declaration of Independence, and much more cheerful.

Of the comic writers of that day, or a little later, putting aside Murphy and Cumberland and the feebly moral school, was one other, whom Mrs. Inchbald has embalmed, who has a sort of American affiliation, and yet, as a writer, is well-nigh forgotten. We all know of Burgoyne's surrender, but hardly one knows Burgoyne's comedies, and yet there are few cleverer or more brilliant, of a second order, than 'The Heiress' and 'Maid of the Oaks.' Richard Fitzpatrick, the friend of Walpole and Lady Ossory, and John Burgoyne, wits and dramatists, and refined, gentle-minded men of letters, were thrown away in that wretched civil war, and forced to unnatural companionship with 'Black Dick' and his brother, the General, and with the Knyphausens and De Heisters and other ruffian Germans. Fitzpatrick was Lady Ossory's brother-in-law,

and one of the Rolliad coterie. He came over here with Sir Henry Clinton's reinforcements in 1777, and was soon sickened with his military work. Portions of his letters to his friends at home have been preserved and are in print, and a sentence of sympathy in one of them has a place in my memory. It is from a letter dated at New York, June 2, 1777. "You cannot imagine," he writes, "anything half so beautiful as this country. It is impossible to conceive anything so delightful. Lady Holland, in spite of her politics, would, I am sure, feel for it, if she could see the ruin and desolation we have introduced into the most beautiful, and, I verily believe, happiest part of the universe."

The only tinge of politics that one detects in the comic drama of the eighteenth century, was what Macklin gave in two plays, in which was intensified a transitory but bitter political sentiment. The 'Man of the World,' originally called 'The True-blooded Scotchman,' is a tremendous embodiment of acrid, popular feeling. It was the Irishman giving vent to a hatred of race, and Sir Pertinax MacSycophant is really a modern Overreach, with an ending almost as tragical. The time was well chosen. Scotchmen were at Derby not very long before, and Drury Lane had been grievously frightened. I am not sure that the fleshless skulls of Lovat and Kilmarnock were not, still, over Temple Bar, and the scandals of Lord Bute and the Princess Dowager were fresh. Then it was that Macklin struck his blow of dramatic satire, and it was effective. But so vigorous and almost tragic were his impersonations that ordinary actors were unable to present them, and in the century which has

elapsed but two have mastered them—Macklin himself and George Frederick Cooke. There is a scene connected with this fierce comedy which is very life-like as well as lively. Horace Walpole in 1781 writes to Mason: "Boswell, that quintessence of busy-bodies, called on me last week. He was let in, which he should not have been could I have foreseen it. After tapping many topics to which I made as dry answers as an unbribed oracle, he vented his errand. 'Had I seen Dr. Johnson's Lives of the Poets?' I answered slightly: 'No; not yet,' and so overlaid his whole impertinence. As soon as he had recovered himself, with true Caledonian insincerity, he talked of Macklin's new play, and pretended he liked it. I am told there is very little good in the play, except the likeness of Sir Pertinax to twenty thousand Scotchmen." \*

But what, all this while, of Tragedy and her "sceptred pall?" Truth to say, it was not very 'gorgeous.' The whole eighteenth century scarcely gives one. Shakespeare, whom the *Saturday Review* thinks "no great things after all," was a great monopoliser, and since he died, no tragic drama has seized and kept the stage. Othello and Lear, Hamlet and Macbeth, still rule the

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\* As is well known, our classic records had a narrow escape from this temporary social or political prejudice. In Mr. Jefferson's first draught of the Declaration of Independence, in the recital of wrongs done us by the King was this: "He is at this time transporting large armies of *Scotch and other* foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny already begun," etc. At Doctor Franklin's suggestion, the italicized words were dropped. To retain them would have been awkward with the Presbyterian Scot, John Witherspoon, in Congress, and the Jacobite Hugh Mercer fighting our battles!

English-speaking mind, and, from Dr. Johnson's 'Irene' and the Rev. Edward Young's 'Revenge,' to Mr. Maturin's 'Bertram,' all is barrenness. 'Douglas,' that odd creation of a Scotch parson's brain, which convulsed the Kirk, had a flashy sort of existence, but who that remembers, in the 'Virginians,' good Colonel Lambert's criticism, can read a word of it without laughing? Yet, like the 'Stranger,' of which Thackeray made so unmerciful fun, it moved honest folks to cry, and the laughing cynic tells us "there was a pillar in the front box, behind which mamma could weep in comfort," and "the big grenadier on the stage" did cry, and "My Name is Norval" holds its own in schools, and is a better elocutionary model than Mr. Webster's "Sink or Swim" bombast or Barbara Freitchie; and Lady Randolph's euphemism of initiate maternity has become classical. 'Fazio' and 'Ion' and the 'Apostate' in our day have had a brief, precarious hold on the acting stage, as, through Mr. Macready's wonderful delineation, 'Werner' had, but Byron's great dramatic poems (and they are great) and 'Philip von Artevelde,' a grand poetic creation, never got or can get beyond the student's inner closet.\* Lord Lytton's 'Richelieu' has a vein of comicality in it, and the treacle of the Lyonesse lady is nauseous to the youngest and the tenderest damsel, whether admin-

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\* A friend calls my attention to a very quotable passage in Sardanapalus, where Myrrha says,

"By teaching thee to save thyself, and not  
Thyself alone, but these vast realms, from all  
The rage of the worst war—the war of brethren."

istered tragically by Mr. Booth, or funnily by Mr. Fechter.

There is another truth which a study of these volumes and of English dramatic literature eliminates—its manifest inferiority to that of the Continent of Europe. I do not speak of Lopé, or Calderon, or Molière, or ‘the great masters,’ as I do not of Shakespeare at home, but of the current drama of the century just ended. The French are essentially dramatic. Their actors are the best in the world, because their drama is, as who doubts who has seen Lemaitre, and Dèjazet, and Rose Chérie, to say nothing of that grand diabolism, Rachel? Their dramatic writers, the most modern ones, are unequalled. Casimir Delavigne’s ‘Ecole des Veillards,’ and Girardin’s (is it not?) ‘La joie fait peur,’ and Scribe’s ‘Bertrand et Raton,’ (Talleyrand and Lafitte, and Parisian politics realized in this travesty of an actual Danish tragedy) are all floating in memory and make us feel how inferior the corresponding literature of ours is.

This ‘Bertrand et Raton’ suggests an odd reminiscence of its days of popularity. It had its origin and success in the Orleans politics of 1830, had a wonderful run, and was announced in London when Prince Talleyrand was ambassador. Great was the consternation. The Lord Chamberlain felt that the fate of the *entente cordiale* was in his hands. ‘Bertrand’ was so terribly like the Prince that no one could mistake the caricature. It was altered and mutilated and disguised till nothing was left but the diplomatic wig. With doubt and misgiving the emasculated comedy was produced, and to the relief of cabinets and the composure of

nations, Prince Talleyrand took a box and laughed heartily at the satire. There is in connection with dramatic censorship in England another anecdote of an ancient date—when Foote, ribald in everything, sent one of his most pronounced farces to the Primate at Lambeth with a meek request that his Grace would make such corrections and erasures as he might think right. The shrewd, good-humored prelate returned the manuscript intact, for, said he: “If I had made a single alteration, the fellow would have advertised his farce ‘As revised and corrected by the Archbishop of Canterbury.’”

## NOVELS—DEFOE TO THACKERAY.

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LET any inveterate novel-reader recast his experience, and, if it be a tolerably long one, it will have strange varieties; from the time when ‘Humphrey Clinker’ was surreptitiously taken from the paternal bookcase, and Hannah More’s ‘Cœlebs’ as religiously eschewed, down to this day of ours, when Wilkie Collins keeps us awake at night, and Miss Thackeray moves our minor and gentler sensibilities. One of ~~the~~ most successful, and cleverest of living novelists, Mr. Trollope, contemplates, as the complement to his strictly professional work, a critical history of English fiction; and, with some misgiving of success, we may hope his plan will be carried into execution; the doubt being, whether an actor can best write the story of the drama, or a novel-writer as nicely discriminate among novels as the genuine, thorough-going novel-reader. And when I speak of one of these, a man is meant (there are many women) who, with a ‘fancy all compact’ and ‘faith sincere,’ reads a book of fiction as if it were a book of truth, and believes implicitly, for the time being, that Lord Orville *did* kiss Miss Anville’s hand, and that Edie Ochiltree and Major Pendennis *are* realities.



It is not a very long record, this of English novels. Less than two centuries will cover it all, though our day has witnessed a wonderful growth of all sorts of clever fictions. Sir Walter Scott tells us somewhere, that in his boyhood Mrs. Aphra Behn's novels were the choice reading of the modestest women; and the *New Atlantis* was once, we know, the fashion. I have, as matter of critical duty, tried both, and the result is simple, unutterable disgust. The 'Grand Cyrus' and (with hesitation I say it) the 'Decameron,' have no charm. I date no further back than Defoe, and begin a pleasant experience of English fiction with one who stands what is, after all, the great test—knowing how to create a living character. Moll Flanders, and Roxana, and Captain Jack, are stupid people enough; but the story of the Plague is true, and who doubts that Robinson Crusoe and—as Madame Talleyrand called him—*ce pauvre Vendredi*, are realities? Who ever will forget Robinson finding the footprint on the sand? It is not a very long jump from Queen Anne to George II., from Defoe to Richardson; and Richardson is read yet, though his shortest novel is in five volumes and the longest in seven. At circulating libraries (witness that most complete one amongst us, the 'Eclectic,' administered by an accomplished and scholarly gentleman) 'Pamela,' a very poor affair, is in demand yet, 'Sir Charles' not so much so, and 'Clarissa' more than all. And who that ever read 'Clarissa Harlowe,' will forget it; or who, reading it, will ever wish to try it again? There are books in the English language—'Clarissa' being one, and the 'Bride of Lammermuir' and 'Kenilworth'—too painful to be read a second time,

I am not quite sure that 'Jane Eyre,' with the mad woman in the attic, and the 'Mill on the Floss,' are not in the same category. (The 'Scarlet Letter' certainly is.) As one going to the theatre, now-a-days, and watching the delicacy and refinement of the acting drama as Mr. Wallack gives it to us, wonders that Wycherley's or Farquhar's comedies, or the 'Fair Penitent' and the 'Orphan,' ever were tolerated, so, far greater is the marvel that a novel founded on such an incident as is 'Clarissa,' could ever have been popular. Yet it was, and, in a certain sense, it is. There are scenes in it which haunt us—the deaths of the procuress and Belton, and the duel between Lovelace and Colonel Morden, the men fighting in their shirts and hacking each other heroically. Yet Richardson created no immortal characters. He furnished names—as 'Grandison' for elaborate politeness, and 'Lovelace' (like Rowe's 'Lothario') for profligacy—but this was all. Not so, his rival and caricaturist, Fielding. He made characters to live forever—Parson Adams, and Partridge, and Booth—that good-natured sinner—but they are in company so low, and so low themselves, one does not care to recognize them; and he devised fictions, of complexity so wonderful and minute that we cannot refrain from admiration; but this is all. The purest-minded man it was ever my lot to meet, thought 'Tom Jones' (with Molly Seagrim and Lady Bellaston) the most admirable work of fiction ever written, and Thackeray bowed down his noble head in homage at the feet of Fielding.\* "The kind

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\* Professor Henry Reed, of Philadelphia, ob. 1854. *Eheu!*

old Johnson," says he, "would not sit down with him. But a greater scholar than Johnson could afford to admire that astonishing genius of Harry Fielding; and we all know the lofty panegyric which Gibbon wrote of him, and which remains a towering monument to the great novelist's memory: 'Our immortal Fielding,' he writes, 'was of the younger branch of the Earls of Denbigh, who drew their origin from the Counts of Hapsburg. The successors of Charles V. may disdain their brethren of England; but the romance of 'Tom Jones,' that exquisite picture of human manners, will outlive the palace of the Escorial, and the Imperial Eagle of Austria.' There can be no gainsaying," adds Thackeray, "the sentence of this great judge. To have your name mentioned by Gibbon is like having it written on the dome of St. Peter's. Pilgrims from all the world admire and behold it."\* Coleridge some-

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\* The best comment on Gibbon's stateliness is in a poem of Landor, from which, as it is fugitive, I quote a few lines :

There are who blame thee for too stately step  
 And words resounding from inflated cheek.  
 Words have their proper places, just like men.  
 I listen to, nor venture to reprove,  
 Large language swelling under gilded domes,  
 Byzantine, Syrian, Persepolitan ;  
 Or where the world's drunk master lay in dust.  
 Fabricius heard and spake another tongue,  
 And such the calm Cornelia taught her boys,  
 Such Scipio, Cæsar, Tullius, marshalling,  
 Cimber and wilder Scot were humanized,  
 And, far as flew the Eagles, all was Rome.

History hath beheld no pile ascend  
 So lofty, large, symmetrical, as thine.

where says: "There is a cheerful, sunshiny, breezy spirit that prevails everywhere in Fielding, strongly contrasted with the close, hot, day-dreamy continuity of Richardson."

Start not, gentle reader, when I say I like Smollett (not his history, which Sir Pitt Crawley thinks is good reading, but his novels) better than Fielding, and prefer 'Roderick Random,' which sounds like truth, to 'Joseph Andrews,' which, beginning in coarse caricature, never gets quite over it. Matthew Bramble and Lismahago and Win Jenkins are immortal, and, in a coarse form, Commodore Trunnion and Strap.

We pass to a new scene, and into a pure, womanly atmosphere, when, at memory's bidding, rise up around us 'Evelina' and 'Cecilia' and 'Camilla' and 'Edgar Mandlebert' (lovers have no such names now-a-days, but are 'John' and 'Stephen') and Delville and 'Old Briggs.' Doctor Johnson, of his pet author's works, thought 'Cecilia' the best; but on such topics 'the great lexicographer' is no authority, and our vote is cast for 'Evelina,' the first, the shortest, and best, and her minute perplexities, and Camilla's woes, with her lover offering up the church's prayers for the sick by her bedside, his voice curing her at once. Miss Burney yet gives the reading world of the English language a vast amount of innocent delight; but she made no living characters! Still less did she, who founded the English school of harrowing romance, Mrs. Ann Radcliffe; and I doubt much if anybody reads now what once made childhood sleepless, or cares more for the 'Mysteries of Udolpho' or the 'Italian' than for those other forgotten monstrosities, 'Abellino the Bandit' or

‘Rinaldo Rinaldini.’ Thackeray, when in this country, used to say, that his choice novel-reading was thrilling ‘dime’ literature, and that he liked, of all things, such romances as the ‘Black Brig of Bermuda’ or the ‘Bloody Barber of the Bowery;’ and I confess it seems to me they compare favourably with Schedoni, or the gore-stained dagger in the ‘Romance of the Forest.’ Then came Miss Porter, with her school-boy delights, Helen Mar and Wallace and Thaddens of Warsaw, which surely no grown man ever reads; and Godwin’s ‘Caleb Williams,’ dark, vigorous, without a woman, and which no child ever relished; and ‘Zeluco,’ and kindred to it, though of later date, ‘Anastasius’—a triumvirate of the hardest-hearted, stoniest books that fiction ever framed; heroes all wicked, remorseful, and unrepentant. One woman of that day—indeed, there are two—must not be forgotten: Sophia Lee, with her ‘Canterbury Tales,’ and Mrs. Inchbald’s really lovely ‘Simple Story,’ with its double plot, and poor Miss Milner and Doriforth. Than this, I reiterate, there is no more beautiful novel in the English language, and in a gentle, winning way, there are scenes painted in it which tighten the throat and moisten the eye wonderfully. We must pretermit the immortal ‘Vicar,’ and can only take our hat reverentially to the good old man, and Moses, and Olivia, in passing by. As I have said, the ‘one sin which women never forgive’ is gently and pitifully treated by the Roman Catholic lady in the ‘Simple Story,’ and the kind-hearted Irishman in the ‘Vicar of Wakefield.’

Coming down nearer to our own day, we hail the steady, healthful, if not very brilliant, reign of Miss

Edgeworth and Mrs. Austin<sup>2</sup>. Of the former, give us the Irish novels; and let us, in the delight of the 'Absentee' and 'Ormond' (who can forget King Corny dying on the field of sport?), really clever books, pardon the stately dullness of 'Patronage' and the grotesque machinery of 'Harrington' (said to have been written at the request of a Jewish lady of Philadelphia), where, however, we may incidentally say, there is a clearer and more life-like picture of the 'No-Popery' riots than Mr. Dickens painted on the highly-tinted *bizarre* pages of 'Barnaby Rudge.' It is in Mr. Hope's gloomy oriental romance, we read, that in some Eastern land, after all adult supplication had failed to arrest a raging pestilence, the hands of little children, raised in prayer, pacified the angry God. So, if the gratitude of the girls and boys who read and speak the English language avail aught in regulating the literary canon, then surely is Maria Edgeworth a saint; for 'Lazy Lawrence' and 'Barring Out' and 'Simple Susan' (take a 'poon, pig!') and the 'Little Merchants' avail more for innocent pleasure and do more good to the young than the aggregated tracts, and dismal, technical fictions which have been issued from all the combined Sunday-school unions from the days of Richard Raikes till now.

At the end of the first decade of this century, English fiction was beginning to become very feeble, when there came shooting, in a mysterious form, and regular though weird-like effulgence, the Great Northern Light, before whom, in our judgment, all antecedent writers of fiction pale. I once heard an eminent novel-

ist of our day criticise the dialogues and conversations of Scott's heroes and heroines as impossible things. 'No men and women,' said he, 'could talk so.' The minute criticism may be just; but what then? Who ever in prose held the human heart so captive as did this whole-hearted, large-brained Wizard of the North? We have lived to see the day when the *genus* or *species* 'historical novel' has run to seed, from Horace Smith's 'Brambletye House' to Miss Louisa Mühlbach's miseries; but yet how different and how wonderful were Scott's illuminations of historical truth! He took realities like Claverhouse and John Balfour and the young Pretender, and both the Argyles and Leicester, and brightened them up and made them shine forth distinctly from the dull ground of history. In no instance more so than Dundee, sitting 'calm as a summer's morning' in the parlour at Tillietudlem after the disaster at Loudon Hill, or dying in the arms of victory at Killiecrankie, where,

'In the glory of his manhood  
Passed the spirit of the Graeme.'

But Scott's realities were nothing to his pure fictions, embodying the history of times and manners. He created, from the mere spirit of the times, immortal men and women—the Baron of Bradwardine reading the service at the head of his men on the eve of Preston Pans, or hiding, ragged and unshaven, in the cave, with a pistol in one hand and Titus Livius in the other, and Edie Ochiltree, and Dominie Sampson, and Jennie and David Deans, and Dugald Dalgetty. No

writer of prose-fiction ever made such an epic as the 'Heart of Mid Lothian.' No painter ever drew a finer picture than the broken-hearted Glenallan at the head of his tenantry, with the bugles sounding, in the 'Antiquary;' and all, though history, pure imagination!

Sir Walter Scott died just when there was stepping on the stage of active life—his career to be shorter than Scott's—the only one who, when the final verdict of criticism comes to be recorded, can claim to be his equal. This, too, is said when, in the gush of sensibility which sudden death is apt to let loose, the world is mourning over the fresh grave of one who claimed to be a rival. The only high writer of fiction since the days of Scott is he whose bust, not his bones, is in the Abbey; who, seven years ago, died sleeping in his bed; whose children, two motherless girls, sorrowed meekly; whose family treasures were not greedily divided; whose walls were not covered with pictures from his own works, for he was too modest for that; who had been a visitor in America without either slandering or flattering us; who shed a tear for a desolated land—and left behind him, with those who knew him personally, and those who did not, save through his works, that sweet and lovely memory which literally blossoms in the dust. There lie before me as I write, the words of a bright American woman, a helpless invalid, which tell a tale of truth. "Often," says she, "when I have closed one of Thackeray's books, I sit thinking with a full heart how much I owe him of what is best in me, of the purest pleasure I have ever known, filled with thankfulness for the power which



has been given me to appreciate him in my poor way.” This is the track which he left behind him here.\*

We liken him to Scott, aside from the mere resemblance of noble natures; and some doubting critic may ask us, why? One wrote naught but what, in one sense or another, was historical romance; the other, ‘novels of society.’ But did not Thackeray illuminate history; and does not tradition tell us and his works reveal, that history was his chief and favourite study; and did he not, when, on the Christmas-eve of 1863, *pallida mors* crossed his doorstep, contemplate, as his crowning work, a history of Queen Anne; and is not ‘Denis Duval’ an historical fragment? † Mr. Dickens tried history in his ‘Tale of Two Cities’ and ‘Barnaby Rudge,’ with the caricatures of Sim Tappertit and Miss Miggs and Hugh; but let any one turn to that wonderful treasury of fact, and fancy made fact, ‘Henry Esmond,’ and, in a less degree, the ‘Virginians,’ and comparison is at an end. They are wonderful histori-

\* I am permitted, here, gratefully to mention the name of Miss Sarah C. Robinson, of Jamaica Plains, a devout Thackerayite, though with a touch of the Dickens infection. Her’s are not the only kind words from distant pens that have cheered these poor essays.

† It was designed to touch the edge of our Revolutionary story, and a leading incident to have been the betrayal of a French gentleman by a German spy: “This Lütterloh had been a crimping agent for German troops during the American war, then a servant in London during the Gordon riots, then an agent for a spy, then a spy over a spy—a consummate scoundrel, and doubly odious from speaking English with a German accent.” Thackeray died before ‘crimping agents’ came into fashion again, and mercenaries, too,—to do bloody work in this land of ours.

cal romances; more wonderful as treating of times not too long ago. 'Esmond' is, in some respects, and certainly to the scholar's eye, the greatest of his works. He thought so himself. It requires the thorough student of history to estimate it fairly; and hence, of course, it has not the wide popularity of 'Vanity Fair,' for everybody knows about Waterloo; or the New-comers, for broken banks and scheming *novercæ* are of all times; and here, in this our day of war and panic and European disturbance, when stock-brokers are failing because our Napoleon is moving, or thinks he is moving, to the Rhine, one notes a striking, homely passage in 'Vanity Fair:' "Our surprised story now finds itself for a moment among very famous events and personages, and hanging on the skirts of history. When the eagles of Napoleon, the Corsican upstart, were flying from Provence, where they had perched after a brief sojourn in Elba, and from steeple to steeple until they reached the towers of Nôtre Dame, I wonder whether the Imperial birds had any eye for a little corner of the parish of Bloomsbury, London, which you would have thought so quiet, that even the whirring and flapping of those mighty wings would pass unobserved there?—*Bon Dieu*, I say, is it not hard that the fateful work of the great Imperial struggle can't take place without affecting a poor little homeless girl of eighteen, who is occupied in billing and cooing and working muslin collars in Russell Square? You, too, kindly, homely flower!—is the great roaring war-trumpet coming to sweep you down, here, although cowering under the shelter of Holborn? Yes; Napoleon is flinging his last stake, and poor little Emmy

Sedley's happiness forms, somehow, part of it. Her father is bankrupt."

This was history in 1815 (now repeated in 1870), painted as Gerard Dow paints, truth with no other varnish than a gentle touch gives; and if the student who knows 1710 only through books of history—Swift's ghastly *Journal to Stella*, that dreary diary of a great, bad, half-crazed man's revenges, or Bolingbroke's *Letter to Wyndham*—will turn to the '*History of Henry Esmond, Esq.*, a colonel in the service of her Majesty Queen Anne,' he will be amazed to find how bright and truthful, how much like history fiction can be made. James the Third, brave in battle, false as were all the Stuarts, lazy, profligate, has had two portraits taken of him. One by Thackeray in this wonderful romance, and one by him who knew him in the flesh, who sacrificed all for him and received in full those wages of which the exiled family were so prodigal,—ingratitude and neglect. "Henry of Navarre, the great-grandfather of the Pretender," writes Bolingbroke, in a fury, "the honestest gentleman, the bravest captain, and the greatest prince of his age." "This man," he adds, "the simplest man of our time, has drunk off the whole chalice of bigotry and folly. The poison met in his composition with all the fear, all the credulity, and all the obstinacy of temper proper to increase its virulence and strengthen its effect. His religion is not founded on the love of virtue and the detestation of vice; on a sense of obedience which is due to the will of the Supreme Being, and of those obligations which creatures, formed to live in mutual dependence on one another, lie under. The spring of his whole conduct is fear—fear of the horns

of the devil and of the flames of hell. He has been taught to believe that nothing but a blind submission to his church can save him from these dangers. He has all the superstition of a Capuchin, but no tincture of the religion of a Prince. No Italian ever embraced the man he was going to stab with a greater show of affection and confidence than he did me."

There is no passage like this in Thackeray, for he did not write didactically or rhetorically; but there are dramatic pictures—scenes in *Esmond*—which make history and historical characters more plain than St. John, with all his skill—and it was marvellous—knew how to paint. We have them before us—the same false, cowering prince, when Henry Esmond rescues Beatrix and burns his patent of nobility at Castletown: "You will please to remember, sir," (not 'sire,' for reverence was gone and loyalty was dead), "that our family hath ruined itself by fidelity to yours; that my grandfather spent his estate and gave his blood and his son, to die for your service; that my dear boy's grandfather died for the same cause; that my poor kinswoman, my father's second wife, after giving away her honour to your perjured race, sent all her wealth to the King, and got in return that precious title that lies in ashes, and this inestimable yard of blue ribbon. I lay this at your feet, and stamp upon it. I draw this sword and break it, and deny you; and had you completed the wrong you designed us, by Heaven, I would have driven it through your heart, and no more pardoned you than your father pardoned Monmouth."

I hasten to an end with much, very much unsaid, and

a heart full of gratitude to this marvellous writer of fiction. The great test of being able to create characters to live forever, Thackeray stands bravely, and nowhere so wonderfully as in these historical romances to which we have confined our attention. I pass by Becky Sharpe, and Major Pendennis, and Colonel Newcome, grandest of men, and Ethel, loveliest of women, even in her infirmities, and Costigan, and Foker, to dwell for an instant on the most perfectly drawn character, with all its shading, ever idealized, Beatrix: "She was imperious, she was light-minded, she was flighty, she was false, she had no reverence for character, and she was very beautiful." We know of no other experiment in imaginative writing like this. Heroines or leading female parts are ordinarily dismissed when the bloom of youth and beauty has passed, or introduced as old folks. Lady Kew and Miss Crawley in the pages of fiction are born old. But in Beatrix—the beautiful and bad—Thackeray did what, we repeat, no one else has attempted, and painted her from the cradle to the grave; and what a picture! Its very contrasts are marvellous. At four years old "the little girl looked at Henry Esmond solemnly, with a pair of large eyes, with a smile shining over a face which was as beautiful as a cherub's, and then came up and put out a little hand to greet him." At twenty, when Kneller painted her, but did not, as she says, do her justice, when the Great Duke came to the playhouse and all eyes were turned to her and not to him, "she was a brown beauty—that is, her eyes, hair, and eyebrows and eyelashes were dark—her hair curling with rich undulations and

waving over her shoulders; but her complexion was as dazzling white as snow in sunshine; except her cheeks, which were a bright red, and her lips, which were of a deeper crimson. Her mouth and chin, they said, were too large and full, and so they might be for a goddess in marble, but not for a woman whose eyes were fire, whose look was love, whose voice was the sweetest love song, whose shape was perfect symmetry, health, decision, activity, whose foot, as it planted itself on the ground, was firm but flexible, and whose motion, whether rapid or slow, was always perfect grace—agile as a nymph, lofty as a queen—now melting, now imperious, now sarcastic, there was no single movement of hers but was beautiful. As he thinks of her, he, who writes, feels young again.” This is very lovely, and Beatrix seems like Burke’s queenly heroine—a bright vision lighting on an orb she scarcely seemed to touch—and yet she was of the earth, very earthy, and no one but Thackeray would dare to follow out the dreary, selfish, worldly course of this woman for fifty years; for it is as near as may be that interval between the fierce, defiant farewell in *Esmond* as the still lovely Beatrix, to her reappearance as the old Baroness Bernstein, with her face red with rouge and redder with punch, hobbling about on her tortoise-shell cane, and making modest boys and girls blush for her coarseness. And then, the end of three-score and fifteen years of folly and self-indulgence, ‘what preacher need moralize that story?’ No English writer ever drew such a picture. It is the great triumph of genius to tell a sad tale so simply and so well. Here it is: “Let us draw the curtain

round this bed. I think with awe still of those rapid words, uttered in the shadow of the canopy, as my pallid wife sits by, her prayer book on her knee; as the attendants move to and fro noiselessly; as the clock ticks without, and strikes the fleeting hours; as the sun falls upon the Kneller picture of Beatrix in her beauty, with the blushing cheeks, the smiling lips, the waving auburn tresses, and the eyes which seemed to look toward the dim figure moving in the bed."

Death-bed scenes, in fiction or reality, have no charm for me. Many a great man in history has been disfigured by the record of his moribund agonies. When Mr. Webster was dying at Marshfield, the Boston doctors published the details of his homely agonies down to the last hiccough, and when he was dead, dissected him and printed the autopsy in the medical journals, as if the *viscera* of a Massachusetts statesman had more pathological interest than those of any hod-carrier that lifted stones to the top of Bunker Hill. Napoleon fared as badly; though, there, there was a mystery to be solved; and the last narrator of the sorrows at Saint Helena, Mr. Forsyth, draws a veil over the dying hero's bed.\* In fiction they are, as a general rule, quite as unpleasant. Scott, to the best of my recollection, has no such scenes, though all remember the fisherman's funeral in the 'Antiquary,'

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\* "I respect the sanctity of the sick-room, and throw a veil over the infirmities of poor, suffering humanity. Before he strikes his last blow, the King of Terrors tramples on our pride, and the weakness of our mortal nature is shown at the death-bed of the greatest as well as of the meanest of mankind."—*Forsyth*, vol. iii. p. 287.

and the death-struggle of Morris in 'Rob Roy.' Mr. Dickens dotes on death-beds, and has a dying hero and heroine always on hand. Smike, and little Paul, and Nell, and Rosa, and Mrs. Skewton; and, if any one wishes to measure the skill of artists, let him study in contrast this last horrid picture, where every tremor of palsy is recorded, and the wretched old woman is "wrapped up in a greasy flannel gown and put to bed," and Beatrix Esmond's, around which the curtains are closely drawn; or poor Miss Crawley's in 'Vanity Fair.' "Peace to thee, kind and selfish, vain and generous old heathen! We shall never see thee more. Let us hope that a tender hand supported her kindly, and led her gently out of the busy struggle of Vanity Fair." Colonel Newcome's is too solemn to write about.\*

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\* In Arthur Helps' latest work, 'The War and General Culture,' is this imaginary conversation: "Mr. Milverton gave us a description of the photographs of the war in America, which had been sent to his friend Dickens, and which they had looked over together, and then:—*Sir Arthur*: I should like to have been with you. Dickens would have been sure to make such shrewd remarks. *Milverton*: He did. He pointed out how the dead men all lay upon their backs, and he noticed a peculiar swelling that was visible in all of them!!"



## THACKERAY—AGAIN.

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ON the 23d of December, seven years ago, a good man (the words are weighed and measured) laid his head upon the pillow, and with mother and children at hand unconscious of the sorrow which was in store for them, slept his last sleep on earth. When the morning came and he was found dead, they wept for a dear parent and child taken from them, and in this grief there was no alloy. He was buried, not in England's mortuary museum, (he was not thought worthy of that), but in Kensal Green, alongside of Hood, and Leigh Hunt, and Sidney Smith, and Lockhart, and Sophia Scott, and whither John Leech and Mark Lemon, as genial as he, have followed him; and he was mourned by true friends. When his will (if he made one) was opened, there was no posthumous sting for any one; no regret for charities which he had grudgingly or ungrudgingly bestowed in life, and no parade of sentimental antipathy to mutes or undertakers.

And when the news of his death, so sudden, so mysterious, so impressive in its solitude, was flashed over the earth, who that ever knew and loved him in the flesh, or worshipped him in his writings, will forget the pang it inflicted? There was nothing spurious or

artificial about it, as there was nothing spurious or artificial about him. The pervading sorrow, through the English-speaking world, was described at the moment in words so wonderful that I am tempted to reproduce them. Read them, reader, and carry your mind back to the events which then were clouding and agitating our humanity. It was the day of undecided war. It was the day of madness.

“Just now,” wrote Henry Kingsley, “the mails are going out. A hundred splendid steamships are speeding swiftly over every sea, east, west, and north, from the Omphalos called London, to carry the fortnight’s instalment of British history and British thought into every land where the English language is spoken. But the saddest news they carry—sadder than they have carried for many a month—is the announcement of the death of William Thackeray. It will come first to New York, where they loved him as we did. And the *flaneurs* of Broadway, and even the busy men in Wall Street, will stay their politics and remember him. They will say, ‘Poor Thackeray is dead.’ Though they may refuse to hear the truth, though they choose to insult us beyond endurance at stated times, let us keep one thing in mind; the flags in New York were hung at half-mast high when Havelock died. Let us remember that. And so the news will travel southward. Some lithe clear-eyed lad will sneak, run swiftly, pause to listen, and then hold steadily forward across the desolate war-wasted space between the Federal lines and the smouldering watch-fires of the Confederates, carrying the news brought by the last mail from Europe, and will come to a knot of calm, clear-eyed, lean-

faced Confederate officers (oh ! that such men should be wasted in such a quarrel, for the quarrel was not theirs, after all) ; and one of these men will run his eye over the telegram and say to the others, ‘Poor Thackeray is dead.’ And the news will go from picket to picket along the limestone ridges which hang above the once happy valleys of Virginia, and will pass south until Jefferson Davis—the man so like Stratford de Redcliffe, the man of the penetrating eyes, and of the thin, close-set lips ; the man with the weight of an empire on his shoulders—will look up from his papers and say, with heartfelt sorrow, ‘The author of ‘The Virginians’ is dead.’ High upon the hillside at Simla there will stand a group of English, Scotch, and Irish gentlemen, looking over the great plain below, and remarking to one another how much the prospect had changed lately, and how the gray, brown jungle has been slowly supplanted by the brilliant emerald green of the cotton-plant, and by a thousand threads of silver water from the irrigation trenches. They will be hoping that Lawrence will succeed poor Lord Elgin, and that he will not be sacrificed in that accursed Calcutta ; they will be wondering how it fares with Crawley. Then a dawk will toil up the hillside with the mail ; and in a few minutes they will be saying, ‘Lawrence is appointed ; Crawley is acquitted ; but poor Thackeray is dead !’ The pilot, when he comes out in his leaping whale-boat and boards the mail steamer, as she lies to off the headlands which form the entrance gates to our new Southern Empire, will ask the news of the captain ; and he will be told ‘Lord Elgin and Mr. Thackeray are dead !’ That morning

they will know it at Melbourne, and it will be announced at all the theatres; the people dawdling in the hot streets half the night through, awaiting for the breaking up of the weather, will tell it to one another and talk of him. The sentence which we have repeated so often that it has lost half its meaning, will have meaning to them. 'William Thackeray is dead!' So the news will fly through the seventy millions of souls who speak the English language. And he will lie cold and deaf in his grave, unconscious, after all his work, of his greatest triumph; unconscious that the great so-called Anglo-Saxon race little knew how well they loved him till they lost him. '*Vanitas vanitatum.*' Let us shut up the box and the puppets, for the play is played out."

This is a powerful word-painting, and the words are not a whit too strong. The air was freighted with sad news then. 1863 was a fatal year for all kinds of genius. It was the year when, of statesmen, Lord Elgin died on the mountain steep of India, following to the grave that other victim of the East—model of accomplished gentlemen—Lord Elphinstone; among heroes, Colin Campbell, and Outram, and Stonewall Jackson; and among men of letters, besides Thackeray, Cornwell Lewis and Whateley. But Thackeray, with the one exception of the Southern chieftain, was nearer to us than all. He had been amongst us, had found and made friends, and, while here and when he went away, said no word or did no thing to give pain to any one. He carried his reserve, when there was a chance of wounding national susceptibilities, to an excess. That he saw our manifold absurdities, is just

as certain as that he measured those of his own countrymen, but you may search his books through and not find a word of sting. The young diplomatist in 'Vanity Fair,' who is angered because a peer conducts the pretty woman to dinner, albeit a perfectly natural character (for does not Mr. Hawthorne tell us something of the same kind of himself?), was drawn long before he came to America.\* Even in private correspondence he indulged in playfulness at our expense very sparingly. His patriotism must, indeed, be of the most touchy texture who can be angry at what he wrote to a friend from Switzerland: "The European Continent swarms with your people. They are not all as polished as Chesterfield. I wish some of them spoke French a little better. I saw five of them at supper at Basle, the other night, with their knives down their throats. It was awful! My daughter saw it, and I was obliged to say: 'My dear, your great, great, grandmother, one of the finest ladies of the old school I ever saw, always applied cold steel to her wittles,' which is all very true; but I wish five of 'em at a time wouldn't." Then, too, when sorrow comes, who so tender and so considerate? There are private letters of his, printed since his death, and which some privileged readers are familiar with, which amply

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\* In the American reprint of the *Prize Novelists*, the burlesque on Cooper was omitted. It is the "Stars and Stripes," and thus ends: "Three days afterward, as the gallant frigate, the Repudiator, was sailing out of Brest harbor, the gigantic form of an Indian might be seen standing on the binnacle in conversation with Commodore Bowic, the commander of the noble ship. It was Tatua, the chief of the Nose-rings."

attest this. And what could be in better taste or feeling than his reference in the 'Roundabout Papers' to one of the enormities of our civil war which happened to touch his social sympathies? Of that war, the writer of these notes happens to know, he shrank from speaking or writing. Scarcely a word was uttered or traced by him on the subject. He had been the honoured guest of the affluent South. He had seen slavery for himself, with its evils and its good—for it had both. He couldn't bear Mrs. Stowe and her school of puritanized fiction. He loved to talk of the jolly little negro boys, happy as the day was long (now voters), whom he once saw playing in the sun on the Alabama River, and his ideal negro ripened in the delineation of the pet servant in 'The Virginians.' The only departure from this resolute silence on the subject of 'the war of brethren,' is in the passage I have referred to. Writing, in 1862, when Mr. Seward and his colleagues were filling the dungeons of Fort Warren with the purest and most accomplished gentlemen of the land, Thackeray, in the *Cornhill*, said; "I went to the play the other night, and protest I hardly know what was the entertainment that passed before my eyes. In the next stall was an American gentleman who knew me. And the Christmas piece which the actors were playing proceeded like a piece in a dream. To make the grand comic performance doubly comic, my neighbour presently informed me how one of the best friends I had in America—the most hospitable, kindly, amiable of men, from whom I had twice received the warmest welcome and the most delightful hospitality—was a prisoner in Fort

Warren on charges by which his life might be risked. I think it was the most dismal Christmas piece which these eyes ever looked upon." So felt the distant Englishman who was called cynical, and we, at home, full of the gushing sensibilities of our American nature, heard these things and saw our friends dragged to prison by the hand of lawless power, and hardly gave it a thought, or if we did, were afraid to utter it. It was in the matter of feeling to this country, North and South, which had been kind to him, that Thackeray stands in so proud contrast with Mr. Dickens. And now let me make a clean breast of it. I chafe under the unreal enthusiasm about Dickens. In the name of sound literary taste, I protest against it. There are two things which Thackeray did not do, and, we have a right to say, however tempted, would not do—slander and caricature this country, and, what seems to me equally enormous, read his own works. He delivered lectures, original essays, here, but they were not *on* Thackeray. Can any one fancy him reading to an audience, with dead-heads and free lists in profusion, the death-bed of Colonel Newcome, with the bell ringing, and the ejaculated '*adsum*' on his cold lips, or Beatrice, dying, with the sunlight falling on the golden-tressed Kneller on the wall, or that awful tragedy of Denceace, in the *Bois de Boulogne*, striking his crippled wife. They may not be too terrible for tears, but they are too grand to be recited by him who imagined them. It may be very well for an author to read, with or without contortions, his 'Little Nells' and his 'Pickwicks' and his 'Bumbles,' but not grand themes such as those I have referred to. I see

that Mr. Dickens's house at Gadshill was adorned with pictures out of his own works,—‘Peggotty’ and ‘Pecksniff’ and ‘Bill Sykes,’—on which he must have looked very much as a Broadway *coiffeur* does upon the wax heads with wigs and ringlets in his window. But would Milton have tolerated Martin's mezzotints in his study, or Shakespeare or Schiller, Retsch, or descending, I admit very far, Thackeray, a *silhouette* of Major Pendennis, or an oil painting of Mrs. Mackenzie? They had nothing in common, and vain is it, now that they are dead, to drag them into companionship, for which in life they were unsuited. One of Thackeray's recent panegyrists has, in a distant way, made the effort, but it is not a success. The rollicking, whole-hearted Thackeray has nothing in common with the sharp, business-like Dickens. Thackeray returns the money to the poor man who loses by his lectures in Philadelphia, and Dickens, as Mr. Field tells us, drives a hard bargain when ‘he shouted in his impressive manner’ to his business man, ‘we are not getting on, sir; we are not getting on.’

Nor did Dickens's death produce in this country the actual effect which Thackeray's did. There was a parade in it,—a Westminster Abbey flavour about it. There was a fuss about his funeral, and, as with Mr. Peabody and Doctor Kane, one felt glad when he was finally entombed. Lecturers are not quite done with him, but it will not be long before the critical world will wonder that it saw anything marvellous in the writings, and will detect something of the earth, very earthy, in the writer. I feel that this sounds terribly like heresy, or blasphemy, or what not, but with criti-



cal truth, as with grander scientific facts, *E pur si muove*.

But to the books, for the temptation is irresistible, to one who knew him, to talk or write of the man. Of what writer is it said, that when an admirer was asked which of his works he preferred, answered, 'the last?' This, it seems to me, is true and not true of Thackeray. His later novels, dating as far back as 'Lovel, the Widower,' are not the most agreeable, yet the fragment of 'Denis Duval' seems to foreshadow a work as grand as anything he ever wrote. I never read it but once, and then the sense of misery with which I closed the last unfinished page has kept me from ever looking at it again. The series of which 'Philip' is the leading and the final figure, founded, first, on a base seduction, and then on the just condemnation of a father by a child, are too terrible for pleasurable reading, and I don't care to read 'Lovel' again, and 'Barry Lyndon' I have never read, and 'Catharine' I wish I hadn't. Of 'Esmond' I have elsewhere in these notes said my say. It is, as a genial critic has lately written, 'a marvel of literature.' Not to speak of its wonderful intricacy of plot (I know a lady who went deliberately to work, so involved and interested did she become, to draw out a pedigree of the Castlewood family), but open it anywhere, and see the gems that shine out from its wondrous pages. When foolish, sentimental women say that Thackeray had no sense of female loveliness and perfection, could they have read 'Esmond' and remember one picture of Lady Castlewood? "It was this lady's disposition to think kindnesses, and devise silent bounties, and to scheme benevolence for those

about her. We men take such goodness, for the most part, as if it was our due; the Marys who bring ointment to our feet get but little thanks. Some of us never feel this devotion at all, or are moved by it to gratitude or acknowledgment; others only recall it years after, when the days are past in which those sweet kindnesses were spent on us, and we offer back our return for the debt by a poor, tardy payment of tears. Then forgotten tones of love come back to us, and kind glances shine out of the past—O, so bright and clear! O, so longed after! because they are out of reach; as holiday music from withinside of a prison wall, as sunshine seen through the bars, more prized because unattainable, more bright because of the contrast of present darkness and solitude whence there is no escape;” or, in that other marvellous passage which it is hard for a man (a woman may) to read without tears, if he has ever had such love, or felt such sorrow, where Lady Castlewood confesses her love to Esmond: “As he had sometimes felt, gazing up from the deck at midnight” (Thackeray had made a voyage from India, and knew well its solemn nightly beauties, with the stars overhead and the ocean in sparkles below, and the balmy atmosphere around), “gazing up from the deck at midnight into the boundless star-lit depths overhead, in a rapture of devout wonder at that endless brightness and beauty—in some such a way now, the depth of this pure devotion (which was for the first time revealed to him) quite smote upon him and filled his heart with thanksgiving. Gracious God! who was he, weak and friendless creature, that such a love should be poured out upon him? Not in vain—not in vain,

had he lived ; hard and thankless should he be to think so that has such a treasure given him. What is ambition compared to that, but selfish vanity ? To be rich, to be famous ? What do these profit a year hence, when other names sound louder than yours, when you lie hidden away under ground, along with the idle titles engraven on your coffin ? But only true love lives after you—follows your memory with secret longings, or precedes you and intercedes for you. *Non omnis moriar*; if dying, I yet live in a tender heart or two ; nor am lost and hopeless, living, if a sainted departed soul still loves and prays for me."

Who dares say that he who wrote such words as these—and many are the kindred jewels, of prose and poetry, too, which can be dug from this mine—was harsh or cynical, and did not know how to fathom a loving woman's heart ? Ethel Newcome stands before us, with all her imperfections, like the statue to which her creator compares her, now hidden in the cellars of the Louvre, and rebukes the slander ; Ethel Newcome, peerless in beauty, impetuous in temper, flirting with the Marquis of Farintosh, or doing, in the Brighton tunnel, what young ladies properly brought up are supposed not to do, is worth all the Clarissas and Cecilias of the past, and a myriad of Little Nells and Kate Nicklebys, the dolls of Dickens.

Thackeray was, in one sense—not a technical one—a religious, or rather a devout man, and I have sometimes fancied (start not, Protestant reader !) that he had a sentimental leaning to the Church of Christian antiquity. Certain it is, he never sneered at it or disparaged it. 'After all,' said he one night to him who

writes these notes, driving through the streets of an American city and passing a Roman Catholic Cathedral, 'that is the only thing that can be called a church.' The brief extracts I have made from 'Esmond' show how dear to him was the doctrine, so alien to Calvinistic Protestantism, of the intercession of the saints, 'the departed soul still loving and praying for us;' and whenever he introduces a 'Papist,' it is in no disrespect. The clergyman, with downcast eyes, saying his offices in the railway cars while the fierce John Bull Protestant glares at him over his newspaper; Father Holt, priest and soldier, in Esmond, the hero's early friend; broken-hearted Lady Steyne, bursting into tears when Becky plays some of Mozart's music familiar in her convent days, and her memory goes back to innocence; and above all, that saintly 'Romish' woman in contrast to Mrs. Hobson's low church vulgarity, Mme. de Florac, lovely in her old age, pious, *devote* in every sense, and praying for the parting soul of her dying lover, a broken-hearted, ruined, noble, Christian man.

But my limits are overstepped, and not one tithe which this theme prompts is said. It would be a rich subject to take Thackeray's minor characters, not his Beckys, and Warringtons, and Esmonds, and Major Pendennis (marvellous creation—one sees him now breaking his seals at the club window), but humble parts in the drama of fiction, such as will occur to every one without enumerating them; or his evil characters, some very bad, like the 'Great Marquis,' but none purely so, except hypocrites like Dr. Firmin and Sir Barnes Newcome. Old Steyne's rugged sym-

pathy breaks forth in very unsaintly phrase in 'Pendennis,' when he sees the Major's sorrow for his nephew's danger, and the "Drive like h—ll" of the reprobate peer is worth all the Uncle Toby profanity, and the recording angel to boot, which once were so classical. There is not even this redeeming trait in the scoundrel of the Newcomes, and Thackeray used to say (for he sometimes, though but rarely, talked of his books) that had Sir John Dean Paul and his confederates been convicted before he had reached the catastrophe of his novel, he certainly should have transported Sir Barnes; 'but,' added he, 'to my British mind the idea of sending a baronet to penal servitude seemed too monstrous and unnatural!'

Reader, these notes are nearly done, but they would have been ungratefully imperfect had they not bestowed a special thought on one so good, so genial, and so great.

## WALTER SCOTT.

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THESE notes are drawing to an end; but the memories—the bound and unbound spectres of pleasant books read and pencil-marked, and yet not spoken of, are thronging around me, and it is not easy to turn one's back on them. And, apropos of pencil-marking, let me in passing say that, like other diabolisms, it is not *per se* as black as it is painted. Vulgar, splashy pencil-marks, of admiration and negation and interrogation, such as 'Jones of the Club' makes in 'Vanity Fair,' are simply detestable; quite as bad as what, according to De Quincey, so much shocked Wordsworth—cutting a new book's leaves with a butter-knife. But a faint pencil-note on a margin, and the correspondent page marked on the fly-leaf, hardly visible except for memorial uses to the writer's eye, do no harm, and are very precious. I have in my day studied Scott's proof-sheets (the originals now in this country) with curious interest, to see how he altered and corrected—and who would not love to see Byron's notes on Barrow (which "he studied weekly")? The dead sometimes live in these innocuous pencil-marks. There are books, in spirit around me now, enriched with such notes by one of the most graceful critics in our land—long since dead,—and I seem to hear his gentle voice, and feel again the pressure of the hand that traced

the fading marks as I gaze on them. Their unexpected apparition sometimes startles me.

To annotate Scott seems to be like annotating Shakespeare, without any excuse of necessity. Is not Scott part of our modern nature—I mean his prose,—though, unlike Shakespeare, he don't admit of isolated quotation; and is he not destined to continue so in spite of controversy? His volumes are part of childhood's association. Every one, I imagine, remembers the first shape in which he saw them. A dear friend pointed me the other day in his study to a rusty, discolored duodecimo, one of Cadell's edition (the best), as the sole survivor of that winter day of fire which burned up the gentlemen's houses and private libraries in Columbia! Memory carries me back much farther, and looking, as one does now-a-days, on the multitudinous copies all around—scarcely a house without them,—it would be curious to know the early statistics of these books, when one firm had the monopoly and issued them at high prices, and on paper on which no village almanac would now condescend to appear. But those primitive days had their delight. To be the first at the circulating library; to crowd to the counter and get one of the ten or a dozen copies, and devour a fresh 'Ivanhoe;' if need be, taking it stealthily to school, and being caught at it by a Scotch Calvinistic or Covenanting schoolmaster who thought 'Old Mortality' as pestilent a book as the 'Age of Reason.' And then it was a mystery as to who wrote them. The 'Great' was truly 'unknown,' and I am very sure we reading boys did not care much about identification, and rather liked it the better for not being known. Mr. Allibone, in his

Dictionary of Authors (that marvellous monument of judicious industry), tells us that Governor Everett once told him that he 'knew' Scott wrote the 'Waverleys' as early as 1818, and I am not prepared to deny, or determined to doubt, conceding the precocious sagacity of that eminent representative of a guessing community; but Scott did not avow it till 1827 or 1828, and the Adolphus Essay did not appear till 1821; and unless Mr. Everett had access to the booksellers' secrets, or knew the handwriting, as Mr. Bancroft says he does Benedetti's, I incline to regard the notion as an amiable senile delusion. We, boy-readers of half a century ago, cared nothing, as I have said, as to who wrote the novels, provided we got early copies, and went on voraciously reading (do boys read so now?)—the 'Scottish Chiefs,' and 'Thaddeus of Warsaw,' and Mrs. Radcliffe, fading away in the new daylight,—and so onward, till the sad day when 'Peveril' and 'Saint Ronan's Well' told us the wand was bent, if not broken. There was a flash in the 'Talisman,' and then all was night; and we were grown men. It has always seemed a curious fact in literary pathology that never, in his best day, did Scott write more charmingly, as if in bright spirits too, than in 'Woodstock,' and it, as we know now, was the child of his direst, sharpest, mental agony, in the crisis of 1826. Who that has gone through phases of pecuniary ruin, and felt the misery with which the victim looks round on the innocent sufferers from his own imprudence, can forget the passage in his diary of the 19th January, 1826? It reads thus: "To-day when I lock this volume, I go to Woodstock. Heigho—Knight came to stare at me to



complete my portrait. He must have read a tragic page comparative (*sic*) to what he saw at Abbotsford. We dined, of course at home, and before and after dinner, I finished about twenty printed pages of Woodstock, but to what effect, others must judge. A painful scene after dinner, and another after supper, endeavouring to convince these poor dear creatures that they must not look for miracles, but consider misfortune as certain and only to be lessened by patience and labour."

Ten days before that dreary portrait was painted, Scott had given one to America. It is still here, and he, for whom it was painted, a welcome visitor at Abbotsford at that very crisis, survives to look at it with affectionate reverence. He was then a young traveller wandering along the Tweed, and, as I have said, now, after forty-five years, still lives amongst us—a Boston man of letters, whose record is defaced by no fanaticism, and who, true to his section, when sections first were thought of, never prostituted literature to sectional politics, and from whose scholarly and catholic pen no acrid drop ever fell to blot his page of letters. He never presented a flag, or made a speech, or wrote an ode. Prescott died, happily, before the day of hatred dawned, but George Ticknor, the guest of Scott at Abbotsford, still lives.\*

That year, 1826, 'sorrows in battalion' came to Abbotsford; and here, with a tender hand, I touch what biography and friendly criticism pretermitted, and which, with our American notions, still unsophisti-

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\* Since this essay was written, Mr. Ticknor has died.

cated, I confess passes comprehension. There is a skeleton, we know, in every house, but what was it that took Scott from his wife's death-bed, he knowing when he left her that she was about to die? From a frivolous voluptuary, such as was Moore who would, like Miss Pratt in the Scotch novel, if need be, go out to dinner in a hearse, one expects nothing better. He always ran away to Bowood or London when one of his children was about to die, and left his 'darling Bessie' to watch the fleeting breath at home. But, somehow, one expects better things from Scott. What can it mean? Read his own account of it: "May 11.—Charlotte unable to take leave of me, being in a sound sleep after a very indifferent night. Perhaps it is as well—it withers my heart to think of it—but in her present lethargic state what would my presence have availed, and Anne has promised close and constant intelligence. I must dine with John Ballantyne to-day *en famille*. I cannot help it!" On the 12th, 13th, and 14th, nothing,—and on the 15th: "Received the melancholy intelligence that all is over at Abbotsford." Then, he hurries home, and meets 'poor Anne,' who did watch, and is hysterical and sobs out 'Poor mamma—gone forever!' and he visits the chamber of death and writes in his diary those striking words, the best description of physical after-death I know of: "I have seen her. The figure I behold is, and is not, my Charlotte, my thirty years' companion. There is the same symmetry of form, though those limbs are rigid which were once so gracefully elastic; but that yellow mask with pinched features which seems to mock life rather than to emu-

late it, can it be the face that was once so full of lively expression? I dare not look on it again." There were skeletons in that Abbotsford household and, but that one might seem to emulate the gossips who lacerate the feelings of the living by hinting that they know the secrets of the dead, there would be no difficulty in 'guessing' what they were.

But the 'Novels'—the staple of romantic literature! Wherever the language is spoken, there they are. They go where the language is not written or understood. There is a scene in the 'Antiquary' which always moved me much, and gave that tightening of the throat—hardly amounting to the *hysterica passio*—so familiar to genuine novel readers. It is when, at the end, in the alarm of the French invasion and amid the wild, vulgar confusion of Fairport, the bugles of the Glenallan yeomanry are heard and the broken-hearted Earl, Eveline Neville's husband,—the spirit of an ancient race brightening on his helm,—marches in at the head of his men to the rescue. I can hardly write it, such is the force of some sort of association, without tears. So I read it as a boy at school. So, in early manhood on the plains higher than that of Mexico, in sight of the snowy mountain of Toluca; and so I read it when manhood was more than mature, on Christmas eve, in the mountains of Penang on the edge of a jungle tenanted by tigers and with the inter-ocean of Malacca literally shining at my feet. Who shall not be grateful to him who gives so pervading, so enduring, and so purely innocent pleasure?

His novels are not perfect, according to any standard, but that is of no moment. To Thackeray is im-

puted, by those who forget Ethel Newcome, the blemish that he cannot make a heroine. Scott failed on both heroines and heroes. As to the former, he always had a subordinate character in reserve, who throws the nominal heroine into eclipse. Meg Merrilies is the heroine of 'Guy Mannering;' and Rebecca, of 'Ivanhoe,' puts the Saxon maiden in the shade, as to the latter of whom, there is a painful veri-similitude in the Thackeray 'Rebecca and Rowena,' which is distressing. Scott meant Effie Deans, the beauty, to be the heroine of the 'Heart of Mid-Lothian,' but freckled-faced, homely Jeannie is. Rose Bradwardine is a sort of lieutenant to the Scottish chieftain's sister, and Edith Bellenden is a nonentity. Di Vernon and Amy Robsart are the best. Heroes—we mean those who love and get married, for such is the novel reader's hero—fare worse. Waverley and Henry Morton are naught alongside of Fergus and Dundee, and Henry Bertram never seems to be rid of a certain cabin-boy flavour or the name of 'Brown.' So it is throughout.

But how this writer of fiction has taken possession of and, as it were, personated history! If memory does not very much mislead, sermons were preached and grave books written to prove (and perhaps they did) that Scott was wrong in his caricature, as they denounced it, of the Covenanters, and his enthusiasm for the Jacobites; but it will take centuries of severe criticism to disabuse the minds of studious, imaginative men, and make us think the murder of Magus Muir a righteous sacrifice, or that Claverhouse was a ruffian. Scott never verified his romances by history,

and I am aware, speaking from memory, of no instance of his referring to a book while he was writing. He would read books, all manner of odd ones, and finding in them something picturesque out of which to weave a novel, he threw them away and worked up history to suit himself.

In 'maundering,' as it were, among these familiar, learned-by-heart books, and using them as cheering agencies in hours of suffering and gloom, I cannot but recall what Robertson said of them. There never was a sharper contrast than between odd Charlotte Brontë, and genial, healthful Walter Scott, and it is thus stated: "I have just finished 'Villette,' and several of Sir Walter Scott's, and am much struck by the marked difference between the fictions of his day and ours. The effect produced is very opposite. From Scott's you rise with a vigorous, healthy tone of feeling; from the others with that sense of exhaustion which comes from feelings stirred up to end in nothing." "I am tired," he adds, "and mentally and physically shattered, and I find Scott the most healthful restorative of anything. There was no morbid spot in that strong, manly heart and nature."

It is not easy to determine what the judgment of later writers of fiction is on this, their great master. Yet master he was not, in the line of what may without disparagement be termed sentimental novels—novels of the day. He wrote none such, with the exception, perhaps, of 'St. Ronan's Well.' All else were more or less antique and historical. 'The Antiquary' and 'Guy Mannering' are on the edge of the century, but none nearer to us. With him, too, as I

have said, historical novel-writing came to an end. All since have been caricatures, like Miss Mühlbach's, or dreary in the extreme. Thackeray rarely refers to Scott, and Dickens, of course, never does. But contemporary 'fictionists' clustered round him. Miss Edgeworth and Miss Ferrier loved him dearly. It is of the latter, of whom I must say a word, that Lockhart relates a graceful incident. When Scott's articulation, at the close of life, became thickened by paralysis, she would make her partial deafness an excuse for compelling him to repeat what had eluded his hearers, and thus save his feelings. To Scott, Miss Ferrier owes some of her reputation, for he it was who, in the preface to one of the series of the 'Tales of My Landlord,' called attention to 'Marriage;' and there is not in the language a more charming triad than 'Marriage,' 'Inheritance,' and 'Destiny.' She repaid it, by making Uncle Adam weep over 'Guy Mannering.'\*

Scott seemed to have no enemies among the gentlemen of his day, English or Scotch. Not even his extreme Toryism alienated them, for though Whig or Radical ruffians hissed him and pelted him at Jedburgh, Whig gentlemen were his dear friends. Faed's well-known picture and engraving of Scott and his friends, hanging in view as I write these lines, is hardly imaginary; for all of them, from Hogg up to Wordsworth, listened to him devoutly as they are painted.

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\* In writing on this theme, of Fiction, these were omitted, as were Miss Eden's lovely novelettes—the 'Semi-Attached House, and the 'Semi-Detached Couple.' Miss Eden is recently dead.

It is a fine group, with burly Wilson leaning over the chair and Crabbe, the best face and figure, intently gazing, with Sir Adam Ferguson in the foreground. How few Americans, by-the-bye, remember that this steady soldier-friend of Scott, was the son of the fighting chaplain of Fontenoi, the secretary of the British Commission which came here in 1778 to conciliate, and if need be, bribe, the revolted colonists into submission. All, long since, gone to rest, and the Scott male race extinct.

As a general rule, and I have presumed to assert it more than once, it is no part of the duty of biography to record the progress of bodily decay, with its homely symptoms. Yet is there any one who wishes that Mr. Lockhart had foregone his wonderful and almost poetic account of Scott's end of life, from the first apoplectic attack at Abbotsford, or Castle Street, I forget which, down to the last breath on that autumn afternoon, "with the window open and the sound of the Tweed rippling over the stones?" There is something terrible in the final crash, the subsidence of intellect, when, descending the Rhine, and leaving its castled crags, he passed Cologne, and sank down to the dead level of hopeless imbecility. The house is still pointed out in London where the crowd assembled at night to hear the news, and, as Allan Cunningham tells us, reverentially to point out the room where 'he' was lying, as if there was no other dying 'he' in London. I confess to the weakness of looking for the house in Malta in the Strada Ponente, and the window where Lady Davy watched him working, before I went to the Church of Saint John

or the hotels of the ancient knights, or the catacombs of the older Christians.

And here, in this connection, and in conclusion, let me refer to two matters, one of literary curiosity, and the other of personal interest as respects Scott which though familiar story in Great Britain is not so generally known here.

Mr. Lockhart little dreamed of plagiarism—indeed was wholly unconscious of it—when, speaking of Scott's dying hours, after the final return to Abbotsford, he said, "Doctor Watson, having consulted on all things with Mr. Clarkson and his father, resigned the patient to them and returned to London. None of them could have any hope, but that of soothing irritation. Recovery was no longer to be thought of; but there might be *euthanasia*." Ninety-eight years before, on the 17th July, 1734, Arbuthnot had written to Pope, "A recovery in my case and at my age is impossible; the kindest wish of my friends is *euthanasia*."

Not pausing to discuss the ethical or sentimental puzzle of 'first loves,' their sanctity, and involution with later entanglements, the fact is unquestionable, that Scott never forgot his, and the son-in-law, in commemorating his ineradicable sorrow on this head, very placidly records that "he never wrote either sonnets, or elegies, or monodies, or even an epitaph on his wife; but what an epitaph is his Diary throughout, and what a picture have we in his entry about the Runic letters which he carved in the day of young passion among the grave-stones of St. Andrews!" Who that 'first love' was, was unknown to me when this essay first appeared in print, and I venture to give



it to American readers now, as it comes to me from one to whom I am at liberty no farther to allude than as a friend of Scott, whom the *Diary of October*, 1826, mentions, as among the kind friends who, on the last visit but one to London, clustered round him, "the amiable and very clever young man" of that day.

"I quite sympathise," he writes, "in the interest you feel about the lady as to whose name you inquire—the first love of Sir Walter Scott. She was the only daughter (said to have been a beautiful *blonde*) and heiress of Sir John Stuart, a landed gentleman of Forfarshire; and slighting the future author of *Waverley*, she married Mr. William Forbes, who afterward succeeded to a Baronetcy, and was the head of a great banking establishment at Edinburgh. The lady herself died in or about 1811, and was at that time fondly pourtrayed by Sir Walter as the 'Matilda' of his 'Rokeby;' Matilda also, as you may recollect, in the poem rejecting a young poet and preferring to him—not indeed a banker, which would not sound so well in poetry, but a warrior chief. You will find several references to her in the later journals of Sir Walter; one passage I recall where he says he met her mother by appointment, not having seen her for many years, and that they passed the whole evening both in tears for the long since departed one."

It will be thirty-nine years next September since Scott died and was buried at Dryburgh, and a century next August since he was born. He was but sixty-one when he died. Men of taste shrink by a sort of instinct from centenaries and unnecessary anniversaries; periodical commemorations of the spurious or the really

great; and yet, if there be an exception, to whom is it more justly due than to him who has given to all who read this language of ours so much perfectly pure enjoyment?

## BULWER'S PALMERSTON.

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WHY not a new book as well as old ones? Why not the record of a man just dead as well as his who died a century ago? Why not a Viscount of Victoria's as well as a Viscount of Queen Anne's day? Why not, toward the end, Henry Temple, as well as Henry St. John, with whom these notes began? Why not Palmerston, as a congenial sequel to Bolingbroke? Every lawyer-student recollects the 'sublime' yet venial egotism with which the Scotch biographer of the Chancellors (it is a failing of Whig literary Scotchmen to write about themselves), when after recounting the traditionary and recorded doings of them all, from Sir Thomas More downward, he breaks forth: "With these eyes have I closely beheld the lineaments of Edward, Lord Thurlow; with these ears have I distinctly heard the deep tones of his voice."

So, in humbler phrase, may I say: these eyes have seen Henry, Viscount Palmerston, and watched him step jauntily into the lists, as knight sure to win, in the House of Commons, the old as well as the new, and noted those marvellous reddish-gray whiskers; and these ears have heard the pleasant, cheery voice, with which, in good Saxon words, he said what he had to

say. Mine was the lot to see and hear him at long intervals, and each time when a leader of opposition, though with his foot surely planted on the threshold of power—in 1845 in the only surviving room (I believe) of old St. Stephen's, when he was sixty-one years of age, and in 1859, when he was seventy-five; and he seemed, if not as young, quite as full of vitality at last as at first. It was on the edge of the brief but momentous disturbance of 1859, the Franco-Italian-Austrian war, for on my way of travel westward the Alpine passes were crowded with Sardinian soldiers returning from furlough, and Cavour was on the same train with us going to consult Napoleon, and France was powerful, and Wilhelmshöhe was not dreamed of. Then was it, that on a night of early April, 1859, the opposition taunted Lord Derby's government with inactivity not masterly, and Lord Palmerston led the attack, not at all acrimoniously, and D'Israeli, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, replied (the words are in my ears yet), warning them of 'the especial danger of a continental war in exciting the hopes and obtruding the pretensions of dynastic aspirants, scattered everywhere, whom tranquillity disarmed,' and the Orleans Princes were eagerly listening in the gallery; and now, Palmerston is dead and irretrievable ruin has settled all pretensions and usurpations; and the great bugbear, which Sir Henry Bulwer tells us 'frightened England and forced and kept her in war,'—a sea-coast from the Elbe to Ushant in the hands of a single Power—seems about to be realized, though in a form widely different from that which then haunted her.

Yet Parliament and constitutional government and

free discussion still stand, and seem more likely to stand than they did when the knights and burgesses met six hundred years ago. And here, annotating this pleasant but rather disappointing book, a word as to Parliamentary eloquence, past and present. Is it deteriorating? This is not an easy question to answer, for the simple reason that, while between reported speeches of different periods comparisons may be made, the great 'reserve,' to use a military phrase, on which the praiser of the past falls back, are Parliamentary traditions—what great orators are said to have done; Bolingbroke's lost orations, for which the younger Pitt mourned; Charles Townsend's champagne, and Hamilton's 'single speech;' Sheridan on the Begum charge, or Fox on the Westminster secretary. There is no measuring them. Lord Chatham comes to us in rather a peculiar form, for though reporting was no science in his day, there were exceptional reporters even then, and he had in Philip Francis one who worshipped at his feet and had a kindred spirit within him, and knew how to report him characteristically. There are passages in the remnants of the speeches of the elder Pitt, as reported by Francis, which stir the blood as we read them now. The biographer of Palmerston long ago told the writer of these notes that he had conversed with one (Earl Fitzwilliam) who had heard and remembered Lord Chatham. He spoke of the general tone as being conversational, and not at all declamatory, only occasionally breaking into vehemence and animation. How unlike the popular notion! The conversational part has evaporated,—the vehement declamation survives. And here let me, in passing,

note a practical perplexity about these orators of vehemence. Demosthenes had as full scope at Athens as on the seaside, and so had Mirabeau with the Notables, and Pitt in the House of Commons; but a fierce, railing declamation, with loud voice and exaggerated gesture, in a room no larger than that in which Chatham spoke after he was translated, seems an impossibility. It was much better suited to what these ears have listened to, a shrewish squabble between two old men across a red table, the actors being Lords Brougham and Campbell. But still greater is the difficulty in comprehending these picturesque traditions in the case of our own 'forest-born Demosthenes.' Any one who has visited Carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia, a plain, modest building, up an alley, worth historically fifty Faneuil Halls, not yet disfigured with cracked bells, and Liberty caps, and William Penn's corpulence, as is Independence Hall, and looked at the room, not twenty feet square, where the old Continental Congress sat—a body never exceeding thirty or forty in number—any one going there may well wonder how, in such a compass and to such an audience, Patrick Henry could have made such speeches as he did. And yet it must have been so, for has not Mr. Wirt in stilted phrase described it, and Mr. Rothermel painted it, in colours no less gaudy? Art is not, we know, always to be relied on, for in this very case of Mr. Henry, the portrait which purports to pourtray his lineaments was a copy of one of Captain Cook on Arrowsmith's map of the world, some one having fancied there was a resemblance between the navigator and the orator.

With this passing protest, I accept the traditions of Parliamentary and Congressional eloquence. As to that of the House of Commons there can be no question. In connection with it, there is what always seemed to me a very precious though incomplete volume, but which, strange to say, is not to be found in Mr. Astor's Library, generally in this department so rich—Sir Henry Cavendish's Debates from 1768 or 1769 to 1774, taken on the spot in short-hand, and partially deciphered and edited (for he died at his work) by the eminent parliamentologist, Mr. Wright. There, we catch the conversational spirit of the discussions of that day, when Fox and Burke were young men, and before the latter began to speak essays; there we can measure George Grenville's stately cold formality, and get an idea (the only place I know of) of an orator whom America ought to honour, but who is strangely neglected, Henry Conway, who had the good luck, as was said of Lord Rockingham and Burke, 'to have his portrait set in diamonds' by Walpole. Here it is we find the best revelations of Lord North as a debater, always able, always courteous, the incarnation of genial wit, whom accident and a crazed; bigoted master made our enemy. He never, or so rarely that 'never' may be said, used an unkind word; and tradition is rich in his good-humoured clever sayings. His pleasant 'There's nothing like being in the secret, gentlemen,' is one of the Joe Millers of Parliament. Another,—told, if I remember rightly, in Mr. McKnight's Life of Burke,—is less familiar, when he said on some occasion when the Episcopal bench 'divided' against him, "That the

first thing the bishops were apt to forget was their Maker." There is somewhere on record a specimen of Episcopal eloquence of a later day than Lord North, which is rather Chathamian. In a debate on the slave-trade at the beginning of this century, Bishop Horsley said, "What is the language of St. Paul?" At this some of the peers laughed. 'The angry bishop turned on them with: "My lords, when I quote the words of a holy apostle, I expect to be listened to, not only with reverence, but with awe." There are charming recollections of Lord North in his old age, preserved by his grand-daughter, familiar to every historical student.

Lord Palmerston saw the light just at the close of Lord North's political career, the close of the coalition ministry, and the beginning of the younger Pitt's long administration, and from birth in 1784 to death in 1870, was the golden age of English Parliamentary story. He was an actor all the time. He was twenty-two when Pitt and Fox died. He was the contemporary of those who had seen Warren Hastings impeached and had heard the glorious debating which England's entangled policy, during the French Revolution, provoked. In that era there was one man to whom Lord Palmerston's meagre journal, as now given, does injustice, and whom the critical student will not fail to recall as one of the most brilliant, though with a milder light than the great planets, of the Parliamentarians of the times. I speak of Mr. Windham, the embodiment of all that is graceful in the character of a Tory Englishman of sixty years ago, without any of its coarseness. His speeches, tolerably reported,



though evidently not revised, are charming, and eminently characteristic of the manly man. He detested French Republicanism and Bonapartism as cordially as did Mr. Burke or Lord Grenville. He loathed Parliamentary reform. He defended bull-baiting and prize-fighting, and said so with a candour which would startle Mr. Bergh out of his propriety. He had a sovereign contempt for all shams, including sham philanthropy, and he said what he thought in the plainest and simplest, and, therefore, the most graceful English. 'He was,' says a most competent judge, the late Lord Lansdowne, 'the most agreeable speaker I ever listened to.' It was he who called the press the 'Fourth Estate.' Windham was Secretary of War in "all the talents." Lord Palmerston was one of the ministry which succeeded them, though not in the cabinet till three years later. Mr. Windham died in 1810, when Palmerston was twenty-six.

His biographer does not tell us much of the boy Palmerston, and the skeleton of an autobiography, put into an appendix, tells less. Perhaps education producing fruits as it did then, and developing so busy and eminently practical a man, had no salient points on which biography could fasten; perhaps the biographer desired to hasten to that period when he himself could appear as an actor and a witness. Lord Palmerston tells the story very curtly: "I left Harrow at eleven, and went for three years to Edinburgh. I lived with Dugald Stewart and attended the lectures at the University. In those three years I laid the foundation of whatever useful knowledge and habits of mind I possess." In 1807, he was in Parliament, and

we have the scraps of a journal, not very sprightly in itself, and which, as most sensible men do, he very soon discontinued. The pleasant letters which, while in the Admiralty, he writes to his sisters, are far better than the diary or the biographer's text. It was the time of the second action of England against Denmark, in August, 1807—the Nelson attack on Copenhagen having been six years before—and Sir Henry Bulwer, in illustration, quotes without comment (for it needed none) a curious letter, which one reads now with interest, from Napoleon on the subject. It is dated on the 2d of August, 1807, twenty days before Admiral Gambier seized the Danish fleet, and is addressed to Bernadotte, 'Governor of the Hanseatic cities.' I note but one phrase: 'If England does not accept the Russian mediation' (Alexander and Napoleon had just been rafting it on the Niemen) 'Denmark must declare war, or I shall declare war on Denmark. In this last case it will be your duty to take possession of the whole Danish continent.' He did not seem to care for the islands. Such was he whom Americans were once taught to reverence! There is something of melancholy justice in the recollection that one of Napoleon's greatest outrages on our young nation was a decree dated at Berlin.\*

This book is very cursory in portions of the narra-

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\* In Lord Malmesbury's correspondence is a letter to him from the then Lord Granville, dated in July, 1802, where Napoleon is described as ending a conversation, held "*en face, à la Reine et au Roi*," with these words:—"Je sens qu'à l'avenir il doit y avoir une haine implacable contre nous de la part des Prussiens, mais je veux et dois les mettre hors d'état de me nuire."

tive, and the reader finds himself, almost without knowing it, brought down—the Percivals and Liverpools and Castlereaghs of the interval being hardly noticed—to Mr. Canning's brief ministry of 1827, when Lord Palmerston, having been successively offered the places of Governor of Jamaica, at which he says he burst out laughing, and Governor-General of India, whither Canning had once nearly gone, became Secretary of War. And here, as these are desultory,—very desultory notes, and in no sense a review, let me recall another instance in my experience of dissipated prejudice. In the days—long since gone by—when, as I have said, Americans were taught to idolize Napoleon, there were correlative objects of detestation. We had thoroughly imbibed English whiggery (more intensely hostile to us than toryism ever was), and believed in Holland House and Tom Moore. Of course the *bête noir* was Lord Castlereagh. Now, if any reasonable man or studious boy desires to have this folly purged away, let him read, as I have faithfully, Lord Castlereagh's diplomatic correspondence when, in 1814, he was controlling the Anti-Napoleonic policy of Europe. He will then see what a brave, manly spirit animated this disparaged statesman. This is specially marked in the letters from Chatillon, and show that it was English sturdiness which finally broke down Napoleon.\* Of that quality, be it high and heroic or not, this Irish viscount was the genuine representative. Of him, however, it was not the cue of Lord Palmerston or his biographer

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\* See Sir Henry Bulwer's estimate of him in his delightful "Historical Characters," vol. ii. p. 259.

to say much, for they are Canningites of the straitest sect.

Of their idol's praises, one might have looked for more. The truth, however, is that, brilliant as was the subordinate career of Canning as wit and debater and orator, his primacy was a brief and troubled one. He never flashed more brightly than at the end, and it was as Prime Minister, in 1827, that he made his celebrated speech on "redressing the balance of the world." Surely there never was more supreme egotism or vaster bombast than his boast, "I called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old"—history telling us that in the recognition of the Spanish-American republics, to which he referred, James Monroe and Henry Clay had anticipated George Canning. And yet the boast was rhetorically effective, for we learn from a critic by no means friendly, that the vigour of the language and the magnificent elocution of the orator carried away the House of Commons in a perfect storm. Moore tells us in his diary that Sir James Graham came to a dinner party fresh from the scene, and said that "the best comment on the power of the speaker was that he could reconcile a severe audience like the House of Commons to such bombast as this." It was in this or a coincident speech that Mr. Canning announced, when the Holy Alliance menaced the Peninsula, that British troops *had* actually sailed to the rescue: "We go to plant the standard of England on the well-known heights of Lisbon. Where that standard is planted foreign dominion shall not come." This has the true ring. There is, however, something uncomfortable about Canning's whole career.

Not that we need adopt the Carlton House story (for, to their honour be it said, George IV. hated both Canning and Palmerston with a hate sincere, though Canning conquered it), that he was, as Lord Yarmouth called him, 'a scamp;' but he was a born manœuvrer, and there is nothing more melancholy in political story than the record, as given in the Malmesbury diary, of the successful intrigue, directed by the veteran diplomatist, the old lion of the Foreign Office, and manipulated by his younger ally, against Mr. Addington for trying to make peace with France in 1801. Canning's triumphant bark came to sudden shipwreck in 1828, among the coral reefs of an alien and adverse aristocracy. There is told of him an anecdote of American interest, which seems droll, not so much from the cleverness of what he jocularly said, as the stupendous gravity with which it is narrated by the most formal and least jocose of chroniclers, the late Mr. Richard Rush, in his *Reminiscences*. It was the fresh day of that venerable and inconvenient dogma, the Monroe Doctrine, and Mr. Rush tells us that when he communicated the dogma "that the United States would not permit or countenance any European power to colonize any part of the American continent," Mr. Canning asked if the President meant to interfere with any new discovery that Captain Parry, then in the Polar Seas, might make? To which Mr. Rush replied: "When such a contingency occurred, it would be properly considered!" Jestings apart, no Canningite, not the founder, not his nephew, not Lord Palmerston, no one, unless it be Sir Henry Bulwer, ever had, or pretended to have, any especial love for us Americans.

The year 1828 brings us (for in less than two hundred pages of the first volume is told the crowded story of forty-four years) to the Duke of Wellington—not soldier, but politician—and Palmerston, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Goderich ministry—and the Duke's first appearance is as a manager, and a dexterous one too. Lord Palmerston records in his diary that when the Duke of Wellington was made commander-in-chief, his military friend, Lord Anglesea, came to his colleagues and said: "Well, gentlemen, I have done what you sent me to do. I have brought you the Duke of Wellington's acceptance as commander-in-chief, and, by God, mark my words, as sure as you are alive he will trip up all your heels before six months are over your heads." And Lord Palmerston simply adds: "Before the six months were well over the Duke was in and our heels were up!"

These notes are neither history nor systematic criticism, but are meant to record random and casual impressions, not only of a book but of the associations, sometimes remote, it awakens. Hence it is aside from their aim and irreconcilable with their limits, to follow throughout the course of personal or historical incidents. The second volume of this biography extends from 1831 to 1841, the most of which time, Palmerston was a leading actor, and then it was that his *protégé* (and well worthy of confidence he was) the biographer appears on the scene. It is, after all, the true way to have biography written, when hero and biographer move, as it were, together. Sir Henry does it very gracefully, and with no excess of the first person singular. We understand both men much better than

we could by the study of Blue Books, as when Lord Palmerston writes to Mr. Bulwer, in Paris, at the crisis of the Egyptian muddle in 1840: "Bullies seldom execute the threats they deal in; and men of trick are not always men of desperate resolves. But if Thiers should again hold to you the language of menace, however indistinctly and vaguely shadowed forth, pray retort upon him to the full extent of what he says; and with that skill of language which I know you are master of, convey to him in the most friendly and inoffensive manner possible, that, if France throws down the gauntlet, we shall not refuse to pick it up; and that, if she begins a war, she will to a certainty lose her ships, colonies, and commerce before she sees the end of it; that her army in Algiers will cease to give her anxiety, and that Mehemet Ali will be just chucked into the Nile. I invariably do this when Guizot begins to swagger." These were the words, the insolent, brave words, of 1841, when perhaps Thiers did bully and Guizot swaggered. And now, thirty years are over, and the voice of insolence is no more heard, and Thiers and Guizot are fugitives, and France is prostrate; and if there be any truth in what, in that same year, 1841, Palmerston wrote to Lord Granville, and Sir Henry Bulwer italicizes: "The aggressive policy of France is like an infection clinging to the walls of a dwelling. It breaks out in every successive occupant that comes within its influence,"—there is no longer any danger, for the building, purged by fire, is in ruins, and its mischievous occupants scattered everywhere!

## AMERICAN HISTORY.

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THE temptation to be for once didactic is irresistible, and as undue gravity, some readers will say, has not characterized these fugitive 'notes' a little sober, serious teaching may be pardoned at the end. Then, too, it is in behalf of oppressed and gentle youth these words are written. In a suburban village, which shall be nameless, a bright young girl, the other day, was pondering, with aching brain and frowning brow, over what, in school phrase, is called a 'review' of lessons in American history, and, on inquiry as to the cause of perplexity, it was revealed that the military operations on the Chickahominy and the pleasant details of the Rebellion were the subject of academic meditation; and this was called studying American history! That all this will, by-and-by, be history for study, and sad, significant history too, is certain, but not yet! The minds of children, North, and, if possible, South, one would think, might as well be left free from the bitter memories of yesterday. And this child knew little or nothing of Columbus, or Cabot, or Raleigh, or even Washington! Doubtless, she knew (as who in this region does not?) the day and hour and minute when the Mayflower was 'entered' in the Plymouth Custom-house, but naught besides. Jamestown is ta-



booed, and 'Romish' Saint Mary's has no place in this canon. Yet American history may be taught, and may be made attractive to the veriest youth, and a vision has, many a time and oft, floated round one restless brain, that American "Tales of a Grandfather" might well and gracefully be written. Who has forgotten how the first 'Tales' came into being?

"A good thought," Scott writes, "has come into my head, to write stories for my little grandson from the history of Scotland, like those taken from the history of England. But I will not write mine quite so simply. I am persuaded both children and the lower class of men hate books which are written down to their capacity, and love those which are composed more for their elders and betters. I will make, if possible, a book which a child shall understand, yet a man will feel some temptation to peruse, should he chance to take it up. It will require, however, a simplicity of style not quite my own. The grand and interesting consists in ideas, not in words. A clever thing of this kind might have a race."

The child, the little grandson, for whom this charming book was written, was then exactly six years old; and the practical sagacity which prompted Scott not to write too far down for children, was verified. Every one knows the complete success of the experiment, in its fascination, not only of the six-year-old boy, but of all the reading boys of England and Scotland—I wish I could add of America, but unhappily the minds of American children are afflicted by downward writing, by too much of the system of instruction suited (such is the wretched misnomer) to the youngest capacity,

which labours to keep it in all the helplessness and feebleness of childhood.

My theory of systematic study of these annals of ours is somewhat in this wise:

The discovery and settlement should, of course, be starting-points. I would make them strictly so; and this, as a mode of adapting the study to the youngest minds. If it were thought necessary, in elementary instruction, to consider American as an offset or shoot from European story, then the boy must have in advance some knowledge of the history of the nations whence the discoverers and first settlers came, and American history must be postponed. But, on the other hand, if the boy be taught that when Columbus and Cabot put to sea on their Westward adventure, they began a new career, then little or no previous knowledge is requisite. The scholar begins with American discovery. And what practical difficulty or objection is there to this? The child who learns Roman history is not troubled with Homeric legends or Etruscan antiquities, but setting out with *Æneas'* farrowing sow, or the cradle of Romulus and Remus, learns the history of Rome from its beginning. So with English and all other annals. Taking for illustration the New England and Virginia settlements, why may not the intelligent child (for it is now a question of childish instruction) learn, as a beginning, that the adventurers, seeking a place of refuge, crossed the Atlantic and began settlements at Jamestown and Plymouth,—their privations and courage, their primitive habits, their wars with the savages, their gradual growth, might be picturesquely told, without reference

to the history, the perplexed previous history of the fatherland; and thus a series of impressions of American incidents be stamped that would, if distinct, never be obliterated. Of course, as the narrative advanced and complex relations arose abroad when the settlement, growing in importance, became properly a colony subject to metropolitan authority, the student will be directed to this foreign authority. But it would be purely incidental. The main narrative of American events need not be interrupted. European history would be illustrative. Of course, I shall not be understood as meaning to sever American from British history, or as broaching the absurd theory that the principles out of which our Revolution sprang were not in a measure derivative. No one can be blind to the clear connection between the principles of English liberty, as embalmed in the English law, and those which were invoked and asserted when they cast off the British yoke. The inheritance of the sturdy common law is ours; the security of parliamentary law is ours too. No one can study thoroughly without knowing all about this and other transatlantic association. But I refer to this mode of isolating American events as a necessary and convenient mode of placing them at first within the grasp of a very youthful mind. It is entirely feasible, if this process of simplification be adhered to; and, if the instructor succeed in making distinct and intelligible his narrative of early American adventure and settlement, he will find his pupils better able at the end of a given period to comprehend the more complex relations of growing society. Of course, in this it may be necessary to appeal largely to the im-

agination of young students ; and, luckily, the history of adventurous colonists admits this. It is fortunate, too, that from the story of the American first settlers, lessons of no little moral value may be learned ; and the intelligent child who is made to understand them is taught the merit of heroism and endurance, of self-control and self-reliance, in a way which keeps him from ever forgetting them. Our children should learn their story thoroughly, poetically, and reverentially. Such were the views of that great teacher, Dr. Arnold, as to history generally.

“These illustrative pictures,” says he, “should contain as much as possible the poetry of history—the most striking characters and most heroic actions, whether of doing or suffering—but they should not embarrass themselves with its philosophy, with the causes of revolutions, the progress of society, or the merits of great political questions. Their use is of another kind, to make some great name and great action of every period familiar to the mind ; and so, in taking up any more detailed history or biography (and education should never forget the importance of preparing a boy to derive benefit from accidental reading), he may have some association with the subject of it, and may not find himself on ground wholly unknown to him. He may thus be led to open volumes into which he would otherwise have never thought of looking. He need not read them through ; indeed it is sad folly to require either man or boy to read through every book they look at, but he will see what is said about such and such persons and actions, and will have his stock of associations increased, so as to render

more and more information acceptable to him. After this foundation, the object still being rather to create an appetite for knowledge than to satisfy it, it would be desirable to furnish a boy with histories of one or two particular countries, Greece, Rome, and England for instance, written at no great length, and written poetically, much more than philosophically, with much liveliness of style and force of painting, so as to excite an interest about the persons and things spoken of. The absence of all instruction in politics or political economy, nay, even an erroneousness of judgment on such matters, provided always that it involves no wrong principles of morality, are comparatively of slight importance. Let the boy gain, if possible, a strong appetite for knowledge to begin with; it is the later part of education which should enable him to pursue it sensibly, and to make it, when obtained, wisdom."

Passing to the colonial times and to a period of higher development in the student, the chief difficulty will be in the variety of materials. But there is nothing formidable in this. An intelligent boy can easily be made to understand that the narrow belt of civilized settlement on the Atlantic coast, from Canada to Florida, was inhabited by one people, or rather that one sovereign authority was recognized, whilst, within local divisions, they had governments of their own. He can as easily learn, for the difference is well defined, what these governments were, and how charter and proprietary and royal colonies are distinguished. The growth of colonial society is easily traced. The influence of an Indian frontier can be defined, with all its romantic horrors. He can form an idea of the wonder-

ful, though impotent, scheme of empire by which France girdled the British settlements by a chain of armed missionary posts from Quebec to the Balize. It is for those only who have not studied it to deny the interest—the captivating interest—of the French and Indian wars, the bloody prowess of Montcalm and Dieskau. It is for such to say that the minds of American youth, I care not how immature, may not find attractions here. Neither Marathon nor Thermopylæ, Cannæ nor Actium, need be neglected, but the American student may learn the actual deeds of border warfare against savages and European mercenaries with as much interest, and profit too, as any legend of antique romance. There is a storehouse of incident in the memoirs of the French ecclesiastical emigrants, yet unexplored; and as to practical lessons in the chronicles of these early times, I say, incidentally, that my mind has always fastened with curious interest on the lesson of one colonial life, which, for the benefit of American youth, I trust may some day be illustrated better than it has been. I mean the development of Washington's character as marked in his early provincial training and adventure. His mother-guarded education, his use of humble opportunities, his copy-books, his self-devised rules of conduct, his geometrical calculations, his rough books of survey (all yet extant), and, at a later period, his wild adventures in the Western wilderness, and the heavy responsibilities, so nobly borne, of his early manhood; all these are materials of biography which might be made to win the attention and repay the studious curiosity of any boy or man. In fact, if simplification

of education be still thought important, there would be no better mode of treating the last part of colonial, and the first of independent history, than by making it illustrative of the single career of Washington, from the date of his first public trust, when sent, at the age of twenty-one, by Governor Dinwiddie (1753) as a Virginian Ambassador to St. Pierre's camp on the banks of French Creek, to his final retirement from public life nearly half a century later, at the end of Mr. Adams's *quasi* war, in 1798. The classic history of America is in this single life, and yet how few American students so consider it! They are content to call him "the father of his country," and "first in war," etc., and know less of his history in detail than of Epaminondas or Publicola.

The reader will understand the natural association which, in noticing these early incidents of our history and Washington's life, prompts me to refer to the following striking contrast from a valuable though unknown periodical.\* It was written twenty-five years ago:

"It is now almost one hundred years since Braddock received his death-wound in the vicinity of Pittsburg, and the field where his army was defeated,

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\* 'Pittsburg Olden Time,' 1846, p. 525, edited by the late Neville B. Craig. It is referred to with commendation by Mr. Parkman, in his 'Conspiracy of Pontiac,' and is a rich mine of original matter. Great are the obligations of the student of history to such painstaking men, among the dead, as Neville B. Craig and Samuel Hazard of Pennsylvania, and Winthrop Sergeant, of New York; and among the living, eminently to Henry B. Dawson, of Morristania.

which was then far beyond the frontier of the Anglo-Saxon settlement, is now but a point on the great route of travel from the East to the far-distant West. Probably, in the whole history of our country, no more striking illustration can be given of the extension of our power than the overthrow of the English army at Braddock's Field in 1755, and the capture of Monterey in 1846. In India, the year after Braddock's defeat, the English sustained severe losses, Calcutta fell into the enemy's hands, and British affairs seemed as hopeless in Asia as in America, but the appointment of Clive in the former and Amherst in the latter soon gave a more encouraging aspect to public affairs in both countries. From that period to the present the Anglo-Saxon race in both countries has extended its dominions with unexampled rapidity. The capture of Calcutta on the Ganges, and the defeat of Braddock on the Monongahela, in 1755 and 1757, mark the extreme points of depression of Anglo-Saxon affairs on both continents; when they are to reach the utmost extent in advance and prosperity, time alone can tell." As these words are written, we have the news that Pondicherry, all that remains of French empire in Asia, has gone from her too.

By the time the student has got to the verge of the convulsion, he will have knowledge enough to fit him for more exact inquiries. From the peace of Paris to the first shedding of blood at Lexington, there is not a year whose history is not full of interest.

On one side, it is to be found in parliamentary debates, statutes, and orders in council. It is a period in regard to which the common notion is singularly



inexact. Its true history is not yet written. Grahame has done the best for it. Its incidents should be traced, one by one, from the day when a penny-wise minister of the crown conceived the idea of raising specific revenue from America, through the long series of parliamentary expedients and equivocations, stamp acts, declaratory laws, tea duties, down to the day when accidental blood-shedding broke the bond forever. This, and the remonstrances, the supplications on our side, which preceded resistance, should be minutely understood. Without it, no one can pretend to measure the true merit of our Revolution, and its difference from all others in the history of mankind. It can never be said of us, or of our ancestors of the Revolution, as was once said by Niebuhr of some later Republicans, that we were "proud of the title of slaves broke loose." The student should be made to study the enumeration of actual grievances in the Declaration of Independence rather than its questionable rhetoric and its false philosophy, and to point out the evidence, which a little study will enable him to do, on which each assertion of a wrong rests. It has been truly said that the vitality of the instrument of Independence itself was its specification of substantial grievances—not the assertion of abstract rights of man. There is authority for saying, that in Great Britain its platitudes made no impression, but such a business-like phrase as "enemies in war, in peace friends," did. "It shows," says Lord Camden to the Duke of Grafton, speaking of these very words, "that the empire is rent asunder." Yet how few are there of the thousands who read and listen every year,

in the routine of patriotic festivity, who, if asked to verify any or all of the accusations of metropolitan power, would be able to answer the appeal? To teach the student to look behind the mere declamation of patriotism, is an object worthy of attention. He should learn the deliberate character of revolutionary redress. He should learn it minutely, accurately, and impartially. He should learn to discriminate between the just and unjust causes of complaint; for there were some, though few, of the latter—and his pride when, thus nurtured in rational reverence for the founders of his country's conservative freedom, he comes to be an American man, will rest on a steadier and a safer basis than mere unreasoning patriotism can supply.

The Revolution itself can be studied in detail most agreeably. Its military story, minutely told, is full of interest; for though its battles were skirmishes in contrast with the campaigning of later times, yet is it not worth while for an American student to learn how, in ancient days, on little more than a month's notice, a rude militia first besieged and then vanquished (for inglorious retreat is defeat) a British army led by veteran generals and strong in all the accomplishments of war? How the same raw levies ripened into armies of regularity and discipline? These were times when "great men led little armies, but little armies did great things." This was Antony Hamilton's saying: "*En ce temps*," he says, "*il n'en alloit pas en France comme à présent: Louis XIII. regnoit encore, et le Cardinal de Richelieu gouvernoit le royaume. De grands hommes commandaient de petites armées, et ces*

armées faisoient de grandes choses.” He will see, too, that there are worthier glories than those of victory, and, from careful and systematic study, will do more honour than he ever dreamed of for the laurels of Trenton and Princeton, to Washington in his hour of overwhelming disaster, his young army cut to pieces and seeking refuge within the lines of Brooklyn, and his resolute spirit in the desolate camp at Valley Forge. For six long years, was he the victim of rash counsels and imperfect means; urged by a military department (such as it was) to action, and left by its improvidence in vexatious helplessness. The American student who makes himself master of Washington’s letters to Congress, to his friends at home, and his distant fellow-soldiers, will have a rationally exalted estimate of his character, such as he never before imagined. He will by pure processes of reason become the ‘idolater,’ which, strange to say, Thackeray is reproached for being, and that, too, by a New England writer of repute.\*

From May, 1775, when the Revolutionary Congress first met as a business body, down to the institution of the executive departments in 1781, its action is worthy of the closest study. How it was constituted, how it grew, and how wisely and patriotically, as a general rule, it acted, should be understood by all American men. The old Congress is not benefitted by comparison with the noisy and declamatory body of a later day. It was in the strict sense of the word ‘deliberative,’ almost conversational. It sate in an

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\* ‘The Virginians,’ chapter 87.

apartment not larger than a common dining-room. It was not a speech-making or speech-listening body. It worked well. For the first few years, it was busy with desperate experiments of currency and credit, raising soldiers, clothing and arming them, and all the while distrustful of its own imperfect organization, and striving to build up something in the way of government stronger and safer. And here let me do honour to the discredited but not dishonoured dead, the maligned Confederation! It did good service in its day. It was an honestly written document—those Articles. It meant what it said. It was not, like another instrument of later date, veneered or varnished with rhetoric, which cracked, and was meant to crack, the moment it was subjected to heat. Gouverneur Morris, although he signed it, did not tinker it, and then boast he had made it ambiguous on purpose. It bore the names of Roger Sherman, and Oliver Wolcott, and Robert Morris, and Joseph Reed, and William Henry Drayton, and the Lees; and it declared itself—alas! for human forecast!—‘perpetual.’

In 1781, Congress relinquished to three executive officers its active functions, settling down into a negative attitude; and here the student will find a new chapter of great interest. I refer to Robert Morris’s financial administration. Of Mr. Morris’s services the prevalent idea is not an exact one. In the common praise bestowed on him as the great financier of the Revolution, dates are strangely confounded. As an executive officer he had nothing to do with federal finance till five months before Cornwallis’s surrender, when the war virtually ended. He had been a mem-

ber of Congress and of the State Legislature, but nothing more. In the latter position, he had done good service in fighting tender laws and price regulations, errors into which the purest and some of the most intelligent of our public men fell; but with federal finance, till then, he had nothing to do. His labours were, if possible, more burdensome, more admirable, than if they had been in the midst of the perils of war and its attendant enthusiasm, which helps finance wonderfully. He came into office when credit had collapsed and the day of expedients was over, and sustained public faith at a moment of perilous transition, when the instincts of self-interest cast back on the country its worthless currency, and revenue was mocked by its own devices. That, at this moment of prostration, when the chances of healthy reaction were as nothing, he should have succeeded in maintaining anything like 'revenue,' and in building up order, is Mr. Morris's true glory. How he did it, the student learns from his official letters. It has always seemed to me that nowhere can the practical part of political finance be better studied than in these letters of a far-seeing merchant, who, called to public trust, administered it on the same principles which guided him in his counting-room. There is, in them, none of the jargon of finance, but a simplicity and directness of style eminently characteristic.

Coincident with what was doing at home, are the foreign relations of the country and the curious yet unsolved problem as to who showed the truest wisdom, Franklin, or his less confiding colleagues, Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams. From the time when Beaumarchais first

sounded Arthur Lee, to the signing of the preliminary Treaty, through all our unskilled diplomacy, the mysterious incident of the robbing of the American legation in Berlin, and 'the lost million' claimed by the French adventurers, with the vexed question of the extent of the obligations to France, the student will find a wide field for the gratification of curious research. I only allude to them, taking occasion to say, that nowhere is to be found a more agreeable, and, so far as I am able to judge, trustworthy account of this portion of our annals than in Mr. Pitkin's neglected volumes. It is the era for which elementary instruction is least competent; and one may hope, by the time the student has reached this point, he will know how to look for himself into the original documents and correspondence through which alone it is to be understood. If it be true that "the proper mode of judicially interpreting the Constitution is by reference to fixed and technical rules sanctioned by the law; if in the appeal to the common law as a standard, in exposition of all doubts as to the meaning of such a written instrument as the Constitution, there is safety, certainty, and authority;" then more than ever is it important that the mind of the student—him who may, by-and-by, be the judicial expounder to apply these principles—should be imbued with the spirit of the times when the Constitution was made, and understand the necessities which forced it into existence. There is no better safeguard against extremes of construction than this actual history of 'mischiefs to be remedied.' Here, too, as in all instances, may Washington's familiar correspondence be studied. In his unpretending diary, kept

during the session of the Federal Convention, he notes that, on its adjournment, on receiving the papers from the secretary of the convention, he retired to his room to 'meditate' on the momentous work, which was then, for weal or woe, completed. And if the imagination of the American student, invigorated by the perusal of Washington's writings and by a true judgment of his character, can rise to communion with these solitary musings, he will better understand the true spirit of the Constitution than from the study of volumes of criticism. He will then know what Washington thought the framers of the Constitution meant it to be. If this be a fanciful craving not to be satisfied, he has at hand a practical exposition in Washington's administration, to which, at the close of this already too much protracted essay, and as a branch of necessary instruction, a passing remark is due.

The Washington administration should be thoroughly and systematically studied, and, as a suitable introduction to it, the debates in the first Congress. They are more valuable than the debates—necessarily more speculative—in the Convention itself, because they are properly legislative discussions, the consultations of men striving to give an organized machine of government a proper direction—trying to make the Constitution 'work.' The first 'administration' can be made matter of comparatively easy instruction. Its incidents are well defined. The first four years have peculiar domestic interest, whilst the end opens the new chapter in which our country, as a recognized independent community, came in contact and collision with foreign nations. How the frail and untried structure escaped

the fearful whirlpool of European politics, at the French revolution, the student should be made thoroughly to understand. If he does, his grateful veneration for the character of Washington must be immeasurably increased. No other man could have held the helm steady in so fearful a strife of exaggerated sympathies and antipathies. A foreign writer, less known than he should be among American scholars, has alluded to this influence of Washington in a passage of so much beauty that I cannot resist the temptation, misplaced as it may seem, here to quote it:

“The conduct of Washington,” says Professor Smith, of Cambridge, “indeed great in these moments, as in all the past, remains above all praise. He persuaded his country,—he enabled his country, to stand aloof from the unhappy storm of European politics; he resigned his popularity to accomplish so great an end, and he maintained the Constitution over which he presided, by severe and dignified confidence in its merits, and a calm exercise of its acknowledged powers and authority. He was insulted,—he was resisted in his own executive department, as the Chief Magistrate of America, by the French Ambassador. The labours of the press, the enthusiasm of the people, the intrigues of societies who voted themselves the guardians of American liberty, the natural sentiment of hatred to England—all were united against the temper and wisdom of Washington; but he rose superior to them all. He contented himself with steadily maintaining the principle of the law of nations and the regulation of his own government, and he then laid an able exposition of his case before the French government, and



calmly desired a recall of their ambassador. A new ambassador was sent from France; the clouds grew lighter, the thunders rolled away, the horizon at length cleared up, discovering the President left in the same place and attitude by the storm as when the storm had found him; but the countenances of all wise and good men were instantly turned upon him with the most animated smile of reverence and love."

No American panegyrist could write of Washington more eloquently or with finer discrimination. If this be 'idolatry,' then, in spite of the Gnostics and Ebionites of our day of image-breaking, am I a worshipper!

## HENRY REED.

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ON the morning of Wednesday, the 11th of October, 1854, a heavy sorrow fell on this gay metropolis, and for once the pulse of money-getting and money-spending stood still. Then, was received the news that one of the floating palaces of which this community was so proud, buoyed up by private patronage and public subsidy, had sunk to the bottom of the ocean, and with it, it was believed, nearly all the passengers. It was the day when the Arctic news reached us; and when the fragmentary intelligence came slowly along that there were a few survivors, and we found how few they were, the realization of the actual horror that not a woman or a child had been saved, was almost as overpowering as the first shock. Sixteen years have rolled by, and the sharpness of grief is dulled, but truly was it the saddest calamity and the darkest scandal which the history of peaceful navigation records. The failure to devise some mode of rescue while the wounded ship was floating for hours on a perfectly smooth sea, is awful to think upon. But the loss of the Arctic spread sorrow far beyond these local limits. It clouded homes elsewhere. In the sister city of Philadelphia, a singularly sharp pang was inflicted when the honoured name which heads this last chapter of my rambling Notes was recorded among

those of the certain dead. There was a desperate search, if not for some trace, at least for some memory of him, in the crowd of victims, but it was in vain or nearly so. "The only survivor," says one of his family, writing soon after, "who was personally acquainted with Mr. Reed, saw him about two o'clock (the collision was at noon, and at five all was over) sitting with his sister in the small passage aft of the dining-saloon. They were tranquil and silent, though their faces wore the look of painful anxiety. It is supposed they left this position and repaired to the promenade deck. For a selfish struggle for life, with a helpless companion dependent upon him, with a physical frame unsuited for such effort, and above all, with a sentiment of religious resignation, which taught him in that hour of agony, even with the memories of his wife and children thronging in his mind, to bow his head in submission to the will of God;—for such a struggle he was wholly unsuited; and his is the praise that he perished with the women and children."

One other personal word, and I pass to books. Mr. Reed was in England in the interval between Thackeray's first and second visit to this country. They had known each other here, and when the news of his death reached the old country, thus wrote Thackeray to a common friend in America. It has never been 'published,' though in print. Reader, if there be one such who does not recognize already the gentle, sympathetic nature, pass this by too, for nothing will convince! It is dated at the old modest house, 36 Onslow Square (in my eyes as classic as 39 Castle Street), on the 8th November, 1854.

"I have your melancholy letter this morning. I had heard of your sorrow, of course, and have kept back writing, knowing the powerlessness of consolation, and having, I don't know what, vague hopes that he might have been spared. That ghastly struggle over, who would pity any man that departs? It is the survivor one commiserates of such a good, pious, tender-hearted man as he seemed whom God Almighty has just called back to himself. He seemed to me to have all the sweet domestic virtues which make the pang of parting only the more cruel to those who are left behind; but that loss, what a gain to him! A just man summoned to God, for what purpose can he go but to meet the Divine Love and Goodness? I never think about deploring such; and as you and I send for our children, meaning them only love and kindness, how much more Pater Noster? So we say, and weep the beloved whom we lose all the same with the natural, selfish sorrow, as you, I dare say, will have a heavy heart when your daughter marries and leaves you. You will lose her, though her new home is ever so happy. I remember quite well my visit to his house in America; the pictures in his room, which made me see which way his thoughts lay; his sweet, gentle, melancholy, pious manner. That day I saw him here in Dover Street, I don't know whether I told him, but I felt at the time his very accents affected me somehow; they were just American enough to be natural; and when shall I ever hear voices in the world that have spoken more kindly to me? It was like being in grave, calm, kind, old Philadelphia over again, and behold! now they are to be heard no more! . . . . I

told him how I should like to be going with him in the Arctic, and we parted with a great deal of kindness, please God, and friendly talk of a future meeting. May it happen one day, for I feel sure he was a just man!"

In nine years the hand that traced these gentle words was cold in death, and the Great Secret was known to both.

There are many men now whose lives are devoted to letters, and not a few to that kind of literature which the French have an honest and expressive word for; and we none. 'Polite letters' is coxcombical—'Beautiful letters' sounds awkwardly, but, as applied to Poetry and Rhetoric proper, it is perfectly expressive. It was not so forty years ago. There were Professors of Classics, and History, and Moral Philosophy, with a divergence to Doctor Blair or Lord Kames, but a teacher of English literature, and a student who, like Henry Reed, gave his whole life to it, for he left the bar and became a teacher at the age of twenty-three, were relatively rare. Even now, we sometimes import them. Of his modest, almost secluded life, little is known beyond the family circle and the city of his birth and manhood (and that city not very loyal to its own), and the result is that the literary materials which he left behind, though promptly published and as carefully edited and annotated as the circumstances permitted, while they are the precious gems of many a discriminating student's library, have not had the extensive circulation they deserve. English booksellers greedily 'pirated' them, as in the present disgraceful state of the law they had a perfect right to do, even though, as here, the sufferers were the widow and

fatherless. One meets them in odd, out of the way places. Corning and Cornell and Schenectady do not use them. But less ambitious seminaries of learning,—quiet, retired schools,—do. In the Southern colleges, at the University of Virginia, and, I believe, at Washington, or, as it is now called, Washington-Lee College (the Rockbridge ‘Liberty-Hall Academy’ of Washington’s will,—the house where Lee’s last gentle hours were passed), one finds them, for Henry Reed left behind him no recorded word, as in his gentle heart he had no emotion, of unkindness or sectional animosity. Fanaticism was no part of his nature. He never stained literature with politics. I have lately found Professor Reed’s lectures used as a text-book in one of the largest Roman Catholic colleges in the neighbourhood of New York, and this though he was and was known to be a staunch and devout Churchman of the Anglican communion in its best and most conservative and moderate days. It was repugnant to his truly catholic nature to allow the pure, spring-like well of literary meditations and utterances to be darkened and poisoned by sectarianism. No word of intolerance disfigures his pages, and if there be any decided expressions in any way or to any extent adverse, they were in a different direction than toward that of the Ancient Church. Anglican schools, such as that model one guided by an accomplished lady, of St. Agnes near Albany, make them text-books, and the copy now before me, well thumbed and marked by the judicious pencil, is that of a Congregational clergyman of the strictest Protestantism, but whose gentle nature and refined taste finds everything congenial here.

It has been said that the non-user of Mr. Reed's books is owing to their not being systematic—that is, not constituting a single volume or a series of elementary instructions in English literature. Their merits, it seems to me, is their being just the very reverse of this. They do cover, in one way or another, the whole course of the poetical literature of our mother tongue from Chaucer to Tennyson, but they are oral teachings—almost conversational utterances. These lectures are what, night after night, he said to his class, and as he said it. They were all written out, but they were fresh, and the reflex of a rich mind. He often did not finish a lecture till a few hours or minutes before he began to deliver it, and, after his death, they were printed exactly as he wrote them and left them. This is their especial charm. Literature, especially poetic literature, was part of Henry Reed's nature—interwoven with the chords of his being. It was always present, and yet there was, in common intercourse, less of the pedant, or what is often synonymous, of the professor, than any human being I ever knew. Note, for example, how literary illustrations were always brightening up around him.

In one of his Lectures on Early English Literature is this passage in reference to Chaucer's 'House of Fame:' "It contains a passage which has struck me as in curious anticipation of a scientific hypothesis suggested in our own days; poetic imagination foreshadowing the results of scientific reasoning. In the ninth Bridgewater Treatise from the pen of Mr. Babbage, he propounded a theory respecting the permanent impressions of our words—spoken words—a

theory startling enough almost to close a man's lips in perpetual silence: That the pulsations of the air, once set in motion by the human voice, cease not to exist with the sounds to which they give rise; that the waves of the air thus raised perambulate the earth and ocean's surface; and soon every atom of its atmosphere takes up the altered movement, due to the infinitesimal portion of the primitive motion which has been conveyed to it through countless channels and which must continue to influence its paths through its future existence. 'Every atom,' says the philosopher, 'impressed with good and with ill, retains at once the motions which philosophers and sages have imparted to it, mixed and combined, in ten thousand ways, with all that is worthless and base....The atmosphere we breathe is the ever living witness of the sentiments we have uttered....and (in another state of being) the offender may hear still vibrating in his ear the very words, uttered perhaps thousands of centuries before, which at once caused and registered his own condemnation.'

"Now I have no thought," says Mr. Reed, "of intimating, in the most remote degree, that in this remarkable train of thought Mr. Babbage was under obligations to Chaucer. The passage has an air of absolute originality; and, besides, the writer of it is too strong-minded and manly to allow such obligations, if they existed, to pass unacknowledged. I have no sympathy with the spirit which delights in detecting plagiarisms in the casual and innocent coincidences which every student knows are frequently occurring. That there



is such a coincidence worthy of notice, will be seen in these lines in 'The House of Fame:'

'Sound is nought but air that's broken,  
 And every speeche that is spoken,  
 Whe'er loud or low, foul or fair,  
 In his substance is but air :  
 For as flame is but lighted smoke,  
 Right so is sound but air that's broke ;  
 Eke when that men harpstrings smite,  
 Whether that be much or lite,—  
 Lo ! with the stroke the air it breaketh ;  
 Thus wot'st thou well what thing is speeche.  
 Now henceforth I will thee teach  
 However each speeche, voice or soun',  
 Through his multiplicacion,  
 Though it were piped of a mouse,  
 Must needs come to Fame's Honse.  
 I prove it thus : taketh heed now  
 By experience, for if that thou  
 Throw in a water now a stone  
 Well wot'st thou it will make anon  
 A little rounded as a circle,  
 Par venture as broad as a coréicle,  
 And right anon thou shalt see well  
 That circle cause another wheel,  
 And that the third, and so forth, hother,  
 Every circle causing other,  
 Much broader than himselfen was,—  
 Right so of air, my live brother,  
 Ever each air another stirreth,  
 More and more and speech up beareth  
 Till it be at the 'House of Fame.'

It so happened that, on his English pilgrimage, in 1854, Mr. Reed made the personal acquaintance of Sir Charles Babbage, and in a letter to a friend at home

he thus describes the use he happened to be able to make of this recollection :

“I told him that I had once in a lecture quoted from his *Bridgewater Treatise*, that startling passage about the perpetuity of sound—and that some of my audience used to say that it almost made them afraid for some days to speak, from the dread that the sounds were to last and mayhap come back to them in the hereafter ; on telling him I had cited the passage in a literary connection—a curious parallelism with a description in Chaucer, he expressed a good deal of surprise and asked me to refer him to it ; this led on to some brilliant talking on his part : he said he had been asked why he had not used light as an illustration of the subject as well as sound—that he had not done so, because it would serve the purpose less effectively for the general reader : he told me that there was a little work so generally attributed to him that it might be asked for at the publisher’s as Mr. Babbage’s religious pamphlet on light, etc.,—he spoke well of it, but did not appear to know the writer—(are you acquainted with it?) He told me that Sir John Herschel mentioned to him that Sir William Hamilton one day, as they were walking together, said—‘ Would you not like to see some great battle of ancient times—say Marathon or Actium?’ ‘ Yes, but how is it to be done?’ ‘ Well, if one could travel away from the earth with a velocity exceeding that of light, he would at last be able to look back on the waves of light first set in motion by the battle and so get a good sight of it.’ ”

It was in this letter that there is a reference of some interest, not to the Byron ‘scandal,’ which was only

to be breathed into female ears, and to be repeated by a woman's tongue, but to the sorrows of the Byron family :

“After he got up to go, by some chance of conversation the late Lady Lovelace's name (Lord Byron's daughter ‘Ada’) was mentioned; he knew her intimately, and spoke highly of her mathematical powers, and of her peculiar capability—higher, he said, than of any one he knew—to prepare (I believe it was) the descriptions connected with his calculating machine (I fear I am not expressing myself rightly here as to the precise nature of the subject he mentioned). He described her as utterly unimaginative, but it was the recollection of her miserable life—he spoke of it as a tragedy—that seemed to sadden him for the while, as he recurred to it, speaking in a lower tone of voice and with a manner so subdued that as I stood listening to him, I could scarce believe he was the same nervously-mannered gentleman who had entered the room an hour before; there was so much feeling in both his words and manner that I did not feel at liberty to question him as to the precise nature of the unhappiness of the life he was speaking of and its tragic termination—he used some phrase of that kind, which led us to think of its having ended with suicide—though I believe this was not the fact. I gathered that ‘Ada’ had a good deal of the Byron devil in her, and that having made an uncongenial match with Lord Lovelace, she cordially disliked him, and that she had also no better feeling for her own mother. It seems to have been a case of triple antipathy between the wife, and husband, and mother.”

The subjects of Professor Reed's Lectures are : English Literature arranged according to centuries and subjects ; English Poetry, being a serial criticism upon the principal poets from Chaucer to Tennyson ; English History, as illustrated by poetry in the plays of Shakespeare, from legendary Lear to Henry VIII.—from Cordelia to Anne Boleyn. The complete series, regarding it as one work, and such it really is, has but one aim—the purpose and power of the imagination as a teacher of historic, poetic, and religious truth. These lectures were written in what may be termed a transition state of public taste. Mr. Reed was old enough to have lived through that season in which the school of Byron and Shelley was in the ascendant, and he began to teach and write at a moment when a purer, and, to him, more congenial influence was beginning to be felt. His poetic idol, strictly speaking, was Wordsworth ; and even without sharing in all his enthusiasm on this head, one can easily understand how the shrine was erected and how the worship began. He had faith in Wordsworth and his school, because he thought that, with their advent, there came a spirit, not of tumultuous passion, but of earnestness, and pure and high poetic philosophy. For a long period (it was so in my boyhood) poetry had been regarded as perhaps the most harmless indulgence of the young and idle and sentimental, to be copied into albums, to be pasted into scrap-books, to be sung, to be recited, to be quoted, to be anything but studied. Mr. Reed's theory (rather an exclusive one, but still his) was, that in the expression of the highest poetical excellence there was a long void from

Milton to Wordsworth—from ‘Paradise Lost’ to the ‘Excursion.’ He thought that from Charles II. and his revellers, John Dryden leading them—through the reign of Queen Anne, with Pope (to whom he hardly did justice as an artist) and Swift and Parnell—and the Hanoverian reigns, down to the end of George III.’s, there was no high, earnest, imaginative power; but that frivolity and sentimentalism in poetic art naturally brooded on the cold pool of infidelity beneath—that it was the long reign of false gods, and that Wordsworth and his reforming, earnest followers were the Iconoclasts who were to break down the images. Mr. Reed, thinking that in his day he had seen this victory of the pure over the impure, the good over the bad, the genuine over the spurious, began, in the glow of theoretic enthusiasm, to teach and expound his views of the power and purpose of the imagination. On these high principles of criticism Professor Reed taught, and he taught with an earnestness of tone that no one can easily resist.

Among these books, if called on to select the one which is most original and attractive, I should choose the Lectures on English History from the dim period of legendary story down to the Reformation—from King Lear to Henry VIII.,—all illustrated by Shakespeare. So far as I know, this use of the great dramatist is purely original, though I have a grave suspicion that if the truth were honestly confessed, more have studied English history in Shakespeare than anywhere else. The idea was the realization of the Baconian apothegm: *“Dramatica est veluti spectabilis: nam constituit imaginem veram. tanquam pre-*

*sentium: Historia, autem, tanquam præteritarum.*" This, he says, was the text of these lectures; and, as it seems to me,—a partial judge,—beautifully is it evolved and illustrated.

And strange as it may at first sight seem, the most attractive and thoughtful of the course are the two lectures where he had fewest authentic facts to deal with, and which treat of individuals purely fictitious, and of times on which the darkest cloud of mystery rests—the legendary Britain of Lear and the Roman period of Cymbeline. In the first, is an appeal for the fatherland, as against what may be termed the Latin-Mediterranean monopoly, which anticipates Tennyson. The passages are too long to quote, and (to my mind) too perfect to be mutilated; but if he or she who kindly reads these words of comment will take the trouble to look at the text, what is said in praise will not be found fault with. So with the Cymbeline lecture,—though here the materials are more abundant; it is a noble sketch of the incipient struggle between the South and North—the Latin and the Teuton—from the time when, as Arnold somewhere says, "The Roman colonies on the banks of the Rhine and the Danube looked out on the country beyond those rivers as we look up to the stars and see with our eyes worlds of which we know nothing," down to the dark days when the conflict began, and Rome was worsted—from Marius and the Cimbri through all the alternations of the Augustan period, down to the hour when 'Northern barbarians sought the plunder of the temple of Apollo,' and 'many a gallant Goth lay buried beneath the rocks of Delphi.'

Among the Augustan annals there is no sadder or more dramatic page—and Mr. Reed so regards it—than the moaning of the Emperor, in the palace of the Cæsars, for his lost Varian legions. It is not a whine from Wilhelmshöhe, but a truly imperial wail. “*Per continuos menses, barbâ capillo que submisso, caput interdum foribus illiderêt, vociferans ‘Quintili Vare, legiones redde!’*” And then how grandly solemn was the scene when, years after, “amid the silence and gloom of the Forest of Teutoberg, Germanicus and his army discovered the rusting fragments of Roman weapons and the bleaching bones of the slaughtered soldiers of Varus.” And here it is that memory suggests a parallelism in our own homely story, to which I refer with entire confidence as to the fact, but some hesitation as to details, for the authority on which I give it has escaped my memory. When, years after the defeat of Braddock’s army in the forests of the Monongahela, a victorious British army advanced on Fort Duquesne by the same route, they came, as did the soldiers of Drusus, to the scene of sorrow, and there they found and recognized the unburied bones of their countrymen. It was actual recognition, too, for the body of a dead brother, bearing a soldierly name (from the days of Braddock to Wellington), Major Halket was recognized (the *anti-climax* is more apparent than real) by the gold filling of a tooth.

Let not the reader imagine for one moment that sombre or undue gravity characterizes Mr. Reed’s literary works. He was in all respects genial, and with a rare and refined sense of humour which is constantly revealing itself. This is very marked through-

out the Lecture on the 'Literature of Wit and Humour,' in the First Course—to one manifestation of which, of some local interest, I venture in conclusion to refer. "The most remarkable instance of obtuseness to light letters that I ever met with occurred in another region. Göeller, a German editor of Thucydides, in annotating a passage of the Greek historian, describing the violence of the Athenian factions, gives two modern illustrations: one of the Guelf and Ghibeline parties in Italy; the other—citing Washington Irving and his book very gravely in Latin—the factions of the long pipes and short pipes in New York, under the administration of Peter Stuyvesant. Imagine the erudite and ponderous German poring over Knickerbocker as seriously as over Guicciardini!" This instance of simplicity has a droll effect in the original, printed at Leipsic in 1836: "*Addo locum Washingtonis Irvingii, Hist. Novi Eboraci.*, lib. vii. cap. v."

The enthusiasm—venial I hope—as to these charming books, almost lost sight of in the vast *alluvies* of print that is rushing by us, I can hardly hope to impart to others; but I cannot better close these rambling notes—too much prolonged, but most indulgently tolerated—than by this tribute to one so dearly loved, so sincerely mourned.

And now, readers, who have been my kind companions for more than a year—Farewell! The familiar books are long ago scattered, and nothing is left but their fast-fading memories.



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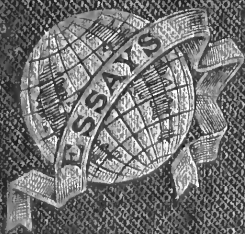


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